

NANCY PEMBROKE.
SOPHOMORE AT ROXFORD

NANCY PEMBROKE, SOPHOMORE AT ROXFORD

By
MARGARET T. VAN EPPS

Author of
"Nancy Pembroke, College Maid," "Nancy Pembroke in Nova Scotia," "Nancy Pembroke's Vacation in Canada," "Nancy Pembroke, Junior," "Nancy Pembroke in New Orleans," etc.



The WORLD PUBLISHING *Company*
CLEVELAND, OHIO • NEW YORK CITY

Copyright, 1930
by
THE WORLD SYNDICATE PUBLISHING CO.



Printed in the United States of America

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I REMINISCENCES	5
II ANTICIPATION	9
III REGISTERED AS SOPHOMORES	17
IV THE CO-ED HATER	21
V THE FRESHMAN MEETING	41
VI AN INTENTIONAL MISTAKE	56
VII "FELICITY FULLER"	62
VIII THE TRAFFIC COP	84
IX THE "HOP-TOGETHER"	95
X THE FLAG RUSH	105
XI HALLOWE'EN HORRORS	120
XII A RASH PROMISE	139
XIII A REBUKE	151
XIV DIFFICULTIES	165
XV CHRISTMAS SURPRISES	179
XVI A COMIC VALENTINE	190
XVII A SHOCK—AND A SUCCESS	197
XVIII A CHALLENGE	207
XIX VISITORS' DAY	219
XX LOOKING AHEAD	236

NANCY PEMBROKE SOPHOMORE AT ROXFORD

CHAPTER I

REMINISCENCES

NANCY, Jeanette, and Madelon were sitting on the terrace resting after a particularly strenuous game of tennis. It was a whole week since they had come back from Canada and been made welcome by Mrs. Grant.

"Isn't it queer," observed Nancy suddenly, "a year ago this time, Janie, you expected to go to Smith College; and I intended to stay at home with Mother and decide what I really wanted to do. And look at all that has happened in a few short months!"

"It was a busy year, Nanny," agreed Jeanette, "and a happy one. I hope the coming one will be equally pleasant. Of course, in your case, a couple of things were not so joyful as they might have been; but you have been happy, generally speaking, in spite of them. Haven't you, dear?"

"Oh, yes; for I've had you to help me weather them."

Madelon, the little French girl who had come

back from Canada with them, looked somewhat puzzled and wistful, as she often did when the two chums were talking over the past.

"You see," explained Nancy, noticing Madelon's expression, "last fall my father had to go West on business. My Uncle John, Dr. Donovan, persuaded Mother to go with Dad and let me go to college in Eastport, where he lives. Janie, like the good pal she is, gave up Smith, and went with me. We had a lot of fun, and formed several friendships at college; and Uncle John made things very pleasant for us when we had any free time. After college closed, he took us to New York for a few days, where we met a Mr. and Mrs. Doyle. When we came home he told me he was going abroad with them for a year. Mr. Doyle is an invalid who has to take some treatments in Berlin. After he went, I came here to stay with Janie until fall. We took a little trip by ourselves up the Rideau Lakes, in July. Then Miss Ashton invited us to go down the St. Lawrence and through part of French Canada with her. You know the story of that trip."

"Yes! Yes!" interrupted Madelon, "and how very, very good of her to bring me back with her."

"She is good," added Mrs. Grant, who had come out on the porch just in time to hear Madelon's last words. "I have known her for

many years, though we seldom see each other now that I have a family to take care of, and her great hobby is doing nice things for young girls. She is a nurse, as you doubtless know, and has nobody but herself to look out for; so she can ride her hobby as far as she cares to. I was not a bit surprised when you came in with the girls; for Lois had written me all about you, and I was pretty sure she would not leave you up in Canada. I think you will be very happy, my dear, when she comes off her present case and you settle down with her in Boston."

"Oh, yes, I am sure; and I am happy here also," said Madelon shyly. "Of course, I miss sometimes my home——"

"That is perfectly natural. For even if your foster mother and sister were not so pleasant since you grew up, after all, the only home you ever knew was up there in Beaupré, under the shadow of the mountains."

"And when do you go back to—to the college?" Madelon asked Nancy.

"Oh, I'm not going back to Eastport. I—I couldn't bear it there now——"

"Surely. I understand. It is that it would be *triste* with the good uncle away," and Madelon nodded understandingly.

"So we're going to Roxford College instead," finished Jeanette. "That is a much larger college, and is coeducational."

"Co—co?" repeated Madelon in a puzzled tone.

The girls laughed.

"Janie means that both boys and girls go there," explained Mrs. Grant. "Just girls attended Eastport. But what I came out here to say was this: that I had a letter from Miss Ashton this morning, and she wants us to put her girl on the train next Friday night. She will meet her at the South Station in Boston the next morning."

"Oh, I hate to have you leave so soon," cried Jeanette.

"Yes? You have all been most kind to me here, but I am anxious to begin my work in the office of the doctor as soon as possible."

"It is wise, I think," said Mrs. Grant, "to become accustomed to the work and get acquainted with Boston before high school opens. Then your mind will be more in readiness for your studies. You won't be getting into too many new things at once. But remember, my dear," she added kindly, "you will be welcome here whenever you care to come. Your little room over the porch, next to Jeanette's, will always be ready for you."

Madelon was a bit incoherent in expressing her thanks, she seemed almost pathetically grateful for what was done for her. But Mrs. Grant understood.

CHAPTER II

ANTICIPATION

JANIE!" exclaimed Nancy, with startling suddenness.

"What? What is it?" asked Jeanette, starting up.

It was a very warm night; and the two girls, in spite of being out on the sleeping porch, where there was more air than in their bedroom, had found it difficult to get to sleep. Jeanette was just sinking into a most delicious doze, when Nancy startled her.

"Let's try to get into the Eta Sigma House instead of a dorm or boarding house!"

"Wouldn't that be marvelous?" Jeanette was now wide awake, and as enthusiastic over the proposition as Nancy. "But could we? There must be quite a demand for those rooms, and you told me there weren't many."

"Let me see. On the second floor there are five double rooms and two singles; and on the third, two doubles and the dormitory which accommodates eight girls. If we could only get one of the doubles. *That* would be perfect."

"But if we couldn't, and could get into the dorm, would you want to do that?"

"I'm quite sure Helen said the Freshmen are put in the dorm, and the room next to it is occupied by a couple of Seniors who keep them in order; but that leaves several other doubles." Nancy was determined to be hopeful.

"Those, I imagine," said Janie, "are engaged a year or two ahead. Those places are awfully popular."

"Pessimist! I'm not so sure of their being so much in demand. The Seniors run the house, and I understand they are a bit strict with the underclass girls. Many of the Freshmen and Sophomores, therefore, prefer to room elsewhere where they have less supervision. I'm going to write Helen first thing in the morning and see if she can get us in. She's awfully popular there; I could see that the week-end she took me to Roxford with her."

"Send the letter by special delivery, and ask her to hurry. You might at the same time put in our application directly with the chapter at Roxford."

"I shall."

"Girls!" called Mr. Grant from the house. "Either go to sleep or stop talking. We can hear you away in here."

They laughed, and settled down for the night.

The next morning Nancy had just mailed the

two letters, and was returning from the box at the corner when she met the mailman.

“Here are the letters for your house,” he said pleasantly. He had been on that route for many years, and knew every man, woman, and child on it; and most of their intimate friends too. “May as well take them along, if you’re going home.”

Nancy thanked him and took the bundle which he handed to her. She sorted the letters over eagerly. One from Boston to Mrs. Grant. That was addressed in Madelon’s prim, old-fashioned writing. One from Martha Scott for Jeanette. Good old Martha! How much fun they had with her when she shared their study at Eastport last year! And at the bottom of the lot, two letters for herself! One of them, stamped and postmarked in Germany, was from her uncle; and the other, from Montana, was from Dad.

She ran into the house calling, “Letters for everybody.” Mrs. Grant came downstairs and sat on the third step from the bottom to open hers. Jeanette ran into the hall from the dining room, where she had been filling bowls with flowers, and sat down on the step below her mother. Nancy herself took the big cane chair in the corner of the hall. Everyone read quietly to the end of their letters, and then exchanged bits of news.

“Well, Madelon got to Boston safely,” announced Mrs. Grant. “She likes the city and her work very much, and sends her affectionate regards to you girls. She seems to just worship Lois.”

“Martha is heartbroken because we’re not going back to Eastport,” contributed Jeanette. “Says she won’t go either. But she will, if Lucile does; she and Lucile got quite chummy the last part of last year.”

Nancy nodded.

“Dad says they expect to come back shortly before the holidays; so I’ll probably spend Christmas at home. How good it will seem to have them again! Uncle tells all about disgracing himself by a shopping trip which he took in Berlin. The maid was ill one day, and Mrs. Doyle very busy; so he volunteered to do the marketing. He *would* do that,” she interrupted herself. “He’d volunteer to do anything that would help anybody. The old dear! Well, he started out with a basket, and went first to buy some beef. After weighing the piece he had selected, he said that the butcher dug up a scoopful of bones from a tray filled with them, and put them on the scales with the meat. Uncle says he wasn’t going to let him take advantage of a poor, inexperienced male shopper, so he objected; but the butcher asked him scorn-

fully if he ever saw a cow that grew without bones! Uncle was properly squelched, it seems, but a sympathetic fellow customer explained that everybody had to take a certain proportion of bones with his meat; 'and,' he added encouragingly, 'it makes real good soup too.' Then Uncle John wanted to buy some bacon, but for that he had to go to an entirely different market. It seems that over there they do not carry fresh meats and smoked meats at the same shops. At last, after wandering over half the city—for they seem to have specialized to the *n*th degree in their selling methods—he went back to the apartment carrying the heavy basket. He noticed that everybody stared at him, but thought nothing of it until he discovered later on that all the people of the other apartments avoided him, except the servants who became very friendly. He made inquiries, and found that he had disgraced himself by carrying bundles. Such an act, it seems, classifies you as belonging to the 'servant' class; the upper classes do not so demean themselves. Wasn't that funny?"

"Awfully funny," laughed Jeanette. "They ought to see you after one of your shopping bouts, Nan. I doubt if even the servant class would claim you."

"Does Dr. Donovan say how the treatments

are affecting Mr. Doyle?" inquired Mrs. Grant.

"Not very well. He is no better, Uncle says; in fact he is not nearly so well."

"If anything happens to Mr. Doyle, will your uncle come right home?" asked Jeanette.

"I don't *know*; but I shouldn't be surprised if Uncle were to stay on until he learns all about the new methods. He is doing quite a lot of studying while he is over there."

"That would be the wise thing for him to do," said Mrs. Grant encouragingly, for Nancy looked sober and disturbed. "It will mean a great deal to him professionally. Many doctors would quite envy him this experience in the German clinics."

A few days later, Nancy had a letter from Helen Morris announcing that she had been able to secure for her and Jeanette a double on the third floor of the Eta Sigma House at Roxford. The two girls were in ecstasies. Mrs. Grant said they acted like a pair of lunatics, and she'd be glad when they had gone to college. The formal notification of the filling of their application arrived a week later.

"Now we can really begin to get ready!" cried Nancy, waving the letter over her head. "What shall we take for our room?"

"For your room!" repeated Mrs. Grant, dis-

mayed at the prospect of buying furniture, "why isn't it furnished?"

"Of course," laughed Jeanette. "All we want to take, Mother dear, is the extras to make it like the rooms of the other girls."

"*Like them!*" echoed Nancy. "*Nicer*, you mean. Let's have the prettiest room in the house."

"Now, Nan," protested the practical Jeanette, "that would not be possible; for many of those girls must be far better off than we are. We can't hope to keep up to them, to say nothing of surpassing them; but we'll make our room as nice as we can afford to."

Nancy laughed. "Prudent Jeanette!"

"But seriously, Nanny, let's try to have the best things we can afford, both for the room and for ourselves, and be *satisfied*. I hate a person who is always apologizing, either to herself or somebody else, for the things she hasn't. It's much easier, and I think more honest, to say simply, 'I can't afford that,' than it is to strain every nerve and go in debt to keep up with people of far greater means. And, incidentally, it makes one much happier."

"We'll do that," agreed Nancy, "and I'll try to live up cheerfully to your high principles. But oh, I do *love* all kinds of nice things, and good times! I should have been born a million-

aire, or at least a millionaire's daughter."

"You would not be any happier," said Jeanette decidedly. "Perhaps not nearly so happy. It's your mind, not your money, which regulates happiness."

The next few weeks were busy ones; for besides buying outfits for themselves, and things for their room, the girls had to file applications for entrance to the Sophomore class at Roxford and obtain records of their Freshman work at Eastport. At last everything was satisfactorily accomplished, and the second week in September they departed for Roxford.

CHAPTER III

REGISTERED AS SOPHOMORES

HOW did you translate this passage, Nan?" asked Jeanette, looking up from a volume of *Horace* over which she had been poring for the last hour.

"I? Oh, I haven't looked at it. And if I had, Janie darling, if you can't get it, I surely couldn't have culled even an idea from it." Nancy tossed her books on the table, and crossed their room to where Janie was studying.

"You haven't *looked* at it! Why the class meets to-morrow, and it's nearly time for 'lights out' now. When do you expect to do it?"

"Maybe I'll get up early in the morning and do it," said Nancy carelessly. "I'll be lots brighter then."

Jeanette shook her head. "You'll never do that. I've heard similar resolutions before about your rising early."

"Well, this time you'll see the realization of them," said Nancy, setting and winding the alarm as she spoke; then she placed the clock on a chair beside her bed.

The next morning Jeanette heard the alarm ring; and, peering at the clock, saw the hour was half-past five. She saw Nancy reach out, switch on the silencer, and settle down again. After waiting a few minutes she asked, "Nan, aren't you going to get up?"

"In a minute," was the sleepy answer.

Ten minutes ticked rapidly away.

"Nan!" she called again. "It's twenty minutes to six."

"I know. I set the alarm far enough ahead so I could—could be—down in time for—for—oo-ah-h-h," she yawned.

"Down in time for what?" persisted Jeanette.

"For breakfast, of course."

Jeanette burst out laughing.

"Nan, wake up! You were going to do *Horace* this morning. If you stay there much longer, you will be ready in time only to go to breakfast."

"Oh, Janie, please stop bothering me. I'm so tired and sleepy! You call me when you get up."

"But the *Horace*!"

"It's not my day to be called on. I'll take a chance and make up some other time," and Nan snuggled down deeper into the bedclothes, and was sound asleep in a minute.

Jeanette shook her head, reset the alarm, and

tried to go to sleep herself; but she was too wide awake by that time to do more than fall into a doze just as the alarm rang at seven. She had almost as hard a time getting Nancy awake then as earlier.

"We won't get our pet table this morning," observed Jeanette as they hurried across the campus and ran up the street toward the tea room where they took many of their meals. The *Porcelain Duck* was very popular, with both "Eds" and "Co-eds."

"No, we'll probably be poked away in the back where we can't see anything," agreed Nancy. "Of course, it's my fault," she added. "But I hope Julia will save places for us, if she gets there before we do."

Jeanette frowned slightly, but said nothing. She did not like Julia Thompson at all, and it worried her because she feared that Nancy was attracted to her. The girl was a Sophomore, who roomed in a private house near the college. She, too, had entered that year from another college, a small Southern one, and having no friends in Roxford was trying hard to annex a few. The girls of the college were a bit cliquish. Most of them had gone through high school together, and the newcomers in the class were apt to be rather overlooked, not through snobbishness, but simply through thoughtlessness.

Nancy and Jeanette had been particularly fortunate in securing a room in the Eta Sigma House; for it not only brought them into immediate and close relationship with the sorority members, but also gave them a certain distinction in the eyes of the rest of their classmates. It was unusual for new students to be able to walk right into a sorority house, especially the Eta Sigma. Julia Thompson had very limited means, a great desire to be popular with the élite, and a passion for good times of the more exciting type. Unfortunately she had taken a fancy to Nancy; whether or not it was wholly disinterested, Jeanette could not decide. Nancy was flattered by the attentions of the big, good-looking girl, and was always ready to join her in any plans for fun. It seemed to Jeanette that Nan had grown a bit loud and more daring, less careful of appearances, than when they were at Eastport.

"They say, though," thought loyal little Jeanette, "that the Sophomore is the boisterous, gay, fun-loving year; so perhaps it is all right."

CHAPTER IV

THE CO-ED HATER

ABOUT the time Jeanette and Nancy were making their final preparations to leave for college, in another small town about a hundred miles away a Roxford Sophomore was imparting some chastening advice to his cousin, a prospective member of the Freshman class. Philip Spenser was the only son of the "richest man" in the town of Benning, and he had been brought up to think of himself as nothing less than the pivot of the universe.

"You'll have to do some changing, boy, unless you want to be thrown out of college bodily."

"Is that so? Why, what's the matter with me?"

"You think you're quite perfect; don't you?"

"Well, no, but——"

"Oh, yes, you do! Of course, it isn't all your fault; for your family has made a perfect ass out of you."

The younger boy's arm shot out toward the other's nose, but he intercepted it and held the

arm in a grip of steel for a moment saying, "Now, don't fly off the handle. I'm only trying to tell you a few things for your own good."

"You think you know it all, I suppose, because you were in college for two years," sneered Philip.

"Well, I know considerably more than you do, and I'm going to put you wise to a few of your shortcomings whether you like it or not; and keep your mouth shut while I'm talking."

So Philip, because he couldn't help himself, sat in silence listening to what his cousin, Tom Mixer, had to say; but it was a sullen silence.

"Ever since you have been in school, you have been led to think that there never was anybody on the face of the earth like you, and that everyone must stand aside for you. Your parents and doting aunts fought other children, as well as teachers, for you; and they made you think that you were always right, and the other party always wrong. Nobody was ever so bright as you, and if anyone else did get higher marks, it was due to unfairness somewhere. In high school, it was just the same; and your lack of popularity with the students in general was laid by your fond family to jealousy. Your know-it-all, condescending manner; your impudence; your propensity for telling everyone, even your instructors, where to get off, as you express it, are to blame—nothing else. You managed to

get away with it after a fashion so far; but let me tell you, you won't in college! There'll be a sorry awakening for you if you try that game there. Neither the fellows nor the profs will stand for it. And as for the girls, they'll simply make fun of you."

"Oh, the girls!" scoffed Phil, as Tom paused for breath. "The darned co-eds! I'll not even look at them."

"Some of the finest girls in Roxford are in that college, and don't you forget. Don't ever worry about not looking at them; for they'll size you up in no time."

Philip put on a brave front and tried to laugh off his cousin's warning and criticism, but he was rather chagrined and annoyed; and, as usual, simply did not believe what had been told him. Observing that his words had been wasted, Tom bade him an abrupt "So long!" and departed.

The next day Phil was on his way to Roxford; and as the train approached the city, he gathered up his new bag and umbrella, thinking, "I suppose that fellow from Beta Zeta, who was down our way last summer, will meet me. He knew I was coming this fall."

But to his surprise, when he alighted from the train at Roxford, there was no one there at all to meet him! The big station was filled with people hurrying to and fro, and after being

jostled on all sides, and nearly crushed by a baggage truck, he succeeded in getting out onto the street. People, autos, trucks, passed in such a continuous stream that Phil wondered how he would ever get across the street. He had never been out of Benning very much, and the traffic of a large city was still confusing to him. Then he remembered suddenly that he did not even know which car would take him to his boarding house.

"Where you bound for, youngster?" asked a voice, and turning hastily Phil saw beside him a tall, well-built fellow, with the shoulders of an athlete and bearing an orange "R" on his sweater.

He didn't exactly relish being addressed as "youngster," but he had to get some information; so he decided it would be best to overlook the affront.

"To 154 Morris Avenue," he replied, adding, "I've come to attend college this fall."

"I'm William Thomas, a Junior, generally known as 'Bill,' and I'm going your way. Come along."

And he dashed in amidst the traffic toward a car, closely followed by Phil, who was in constant terror of having his heels nipped off by the autos which passed so perilously close.

"You're a Freshie, aren't you?" asked Bill, when they were safely on their way.

“Yes; but how did you know it?”

Bill smiled. “Oh, I caught sight of your woe-begone face, and says I to myself, ‘I’ll bet that’s one of our pea-green Freshmen over there.’ And when I saw ‘Roxford College’ on that,” pointing to Phil’s suitcase, “I knew that Willie was dead right. Then, too, you’re all so much alike; and we’ve seen so many of you, that now we can pick you out a mile away and never make a mistake either.”

Bill chatted on, giving his self-imposed charge a great deal of useful information regarding college, professors, co-eds, rules, and customs, until they reached the boarding house.

Phil had taken quite a fancy to his witty, outspoken companion, and was overjoyed to find that he roomed in the same house—a comfortable old brick house, only a block from the college.

The two boys went in by the front entrance, Bill calling loudly for Mrs. Mason. A stout, middle-aged woman appeared; and after being introduced to Phil, she led them down the hall to his room. It was on the first floor, opening onto a square porch, and was well furnished with everything needful for a student’s comfort. It was really a most attractive place in which to spend the college year.

“You’re lucky to get this room,” said Bill; “it seldom goes to a frosh.”

"Your cousin, Tom Mixer, wrote me to let you have it if possible," interrupted Mrs. Mason. "He used to room here, and wanted you to have his old quarters now that he is going to the Fraternity House. I was glad to oblige him, for he is a fine young man."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure," murmured Phil, who would have greatly preferred to stay at a hotel until he could get into a Frat House, which he judged to be just a question of days. But his father, counseled by Tom, had strictly forbidden it.

"You'll have plenty of company," Bill assured him, "as soon as the fellows find out what a fine room you have." Then he added in an impressive tone, "Your friends, the Sophs, too, may pay you some friendly calls."

"Oh, I'm not afraid of them; they won't bother *me* any, I guess," boasted Phil in a confident tone.

Bill looked at him sharply, but just laughed and went out; and Phil smiled contemptuously as he pictured the Sophs doing anything to *him*.

The first week or two passed quickly, for there were many things to occupy the first year men: classmates to become acquainted with, members of the faculty to be distinguished from one another, Sophs to be avoided, upper classmen to be obeyed, and the various classrooms

to be located. These and other duties occupied Phil so completely that he had no time to be unpleasant; and he had almost forgotten Bill's warning about a call from his enemies.

One evening, however, just before settling down for study, like a flash of lightning came the thought, "I must look out for the Sophs pretty soon." A door and a window opened onto the porch; no harm to secure them, anyhow. He closed and fastened the blinds, and locked the window and door. Might as well lock the door leading into the hall, too. It was a rather warm night, and he'd probably half suffocate; but it would be a good joke on the Sophs, if they did call, to find everything secure. They'd see that he hadn't been so slow after all. They couldn't bother *him*! Of course, he wasn't at all afraid of any Soph ever born, but it was just as well to be on the safe side.

The next day's assignments were so difficult that they took his undivided attention until the clock struck ten.

While preparing for bed, he smiled at having taken so many precautions, and was half inclined to undo them; but he was pretty sleepy to bother, and, calling himself all kinds of a fool for his trouble, he put out the light and got into bed. It was beastly hot with everything closed; and after tossing restlessly for

half an hour, he decided to get up and open the window. Just at that moment a faint, peculiar creak caught his ear; the third step leading to his porch was the only thing that made *that* noise. Rigid, and hardly daring to breathe, he lay listening so intensely that it seemed as if his strained eardrums must crack.

All was quiet again, and he blamed some prowling dog for the noise. The scare over, his tense muscles relaxed and he began to get drowsy; though he had, some way, neglected to open the window.

A sudden thump outside, and he found himself sitting bolt upright, clutching the sides of the bed with both hands; and awaiting—he knew not what. A slight scraping noise on the porch told him that whoever was out there had evidently come in contact with one of the big rocking chairs, and he forced a smile at their discomfiture. Another silence. But no use now trying to deceive himself; there certainly was someone after him. What should he do? What should he do? Bill was away. Mrs. Mason and the maid slept at the other end of the house, and there were no other sleeping rooms downstairs. He couldn't hide behind women anyhow. It would do him no good, therefore, to call for help. Neither would there be any object in flight; for his room was as secure as any in the house; and to go out would be to fall

right into the hands of the enemies. If he only had a revolver, just to frighten them with in case they did get in. Of course, he wasn't afraid; he only wanted to find some way to outwit them. He might go and peer out to see how many there were. But no, perhaps he had better not. Shivering, with cold it must be, for surely it could not be terror, he lay down again and soothed himself with assurances of perfect safety. They couldn't possibly get in; he had fastened up too securely for that. Why, he had even wedged nails into the window frames. It was all folly to be alarmed; he'd just go to sleep. After making a noise, they had probably given up for that night and gone home. Pretty smart of him to get the better of them like that!

Comforting thoughts! But soon a hand fumbling at the blinds scattered them like the leaves before the wind. The blinds resisted, and once more quiet reigned outside. Inside, a heart beat wildly in great leaps and thumps.

Crack! A small portion of the shutter gave way to admit a hand to the catch.

"Oh, what had I better do?" cried poor Phil to himself, pitifully undecided whether to move or remain still. A bright thought came. The bed was in a far corner against the wall. He would crawl under it, and fool them yet.

Carefully, quietly, he tore a blanket from

the bed, wrapped it around him, and crept, caterpillar fashion, into a corner and lay crouched against the walls. Now what a joke on them if they did get in! They'd think he had escaped. But, horrors! His clothes were on the chair by the bed. Never do to leave them there. Would he have time to crawl out and under again before the window was opened? The nails ought to hold for a time.

Raising up so quickly that he gave his head a good whack on the springs, he laboriously wriggled out, seized his clothes, and began his return trip, hastened to the point of desperation by the click of a key in the door. Crouched against the wall he listened for the trial of various keys, which all refused to work. He had forgotten that he had left his own key in the lock, turned sidewise; so he was quite safe so far as that door was concerned.

Hours seemed to pass as he lay there, telling himself in the brief intervals of stillness that he'd fix 'em; no Sophs could get ahead of him. Then a renewed attempt on door or window would make him cower closer to the wall so they couldn't possibly see him if they should happen to get in. Strange how chilly the night had become, and he had thought it was warm; but he couldn't help shivering. And how his teeth chattered!

At last, toward morning, he fell asleep from

sheer exhaustion, and he slept until his usual hour for rising. Half inclined to believe it all a nightmare, yet also feeling rather proud of his forethought and courage, he got ready for an early class. After a hasty breakfast, he ran out of the front door, that being the shortest route; for he was rather late. As he started down the path between the trees, he was seized by strong hands, a gag placed in his mouth, a bandage over his eyes, and he was in an auto speeding down the road before he knew quite what was happening to him. It was all over with him now; the Sophs had won out after all.

"They must have slept on the porch all night, or else have come back after daybreak," he thought.

"It will be a long time before he sees home again," said one of his captors.

"You bet!" agreed another.

"Isn't he the 'cream in your coffee,' though? But wait until we're through with him," added a third.

"Regular mamma's boy," added a fourth voice. "Going to give him the twenty-third degree?"

"Sure, with a few extras added. Think you'll like it, sonny?" And he gave Phil such a whack that he wondered if his shoulders were broken.

"Why don't you answer when you're spoken

to?" asked the first voice, giving the unhappy victim a dig in the ribs.

"Yes, didn't your mamma teach you any manners?" demanded the second voice, giving him a kick in the shins.

Thus they traveled, it seemed to Phil, for miles, coming to a halt finally before the *Porcelain Duck*.

The bandage was removed from Phil's eyes and he got his first look at his tormentors. The first voice belonged to Ben Smith, the second to Chet House, the third to Ted Moore, and the fourth to Roy Thompson, all leaders of the Sophomore Class.

"Now, my young friend," cried Ted, "we've had no breakfast, and you'll have to provide it for us. Got any money?"

Phil shook his head.

"Go through his pockets and see if he's lying," ordered Ben; but the search revealed only half a dollar.

Phil found that one spent more money at college than he had supposed. He had written home for more money, and expected to receive a check by mail that day.

"Well, we'll keep the two bits, but it's of no use at all. You'll have to earn food for us," decreed Ted.

They proceeded into the dining room, and

after a whispered conference with the manager the boys took their places at one of the center tables. When the order for breakfast for four had been served, Ted explained to the crowd of men and girls who were in the room that they had unfortunately come without their pocket-books; and as a special favor, the manager had agreed to let their young companion pay for the meal by entertaining the crowd.

"Now," said Ted, removing the gag from Phil's mouth, "climb up on that chair and sing."

"I can't," protested poor Phil. "I never sing."

"No back talk! Up with you," ordered Ben.

The miserable Freshman, his self-assurance sadly lacking, mounted the chair attempted, with all the success of one to whom a singing voice has been denied, to give them *Mother Machree*, interrupted by howls of laughter; and at the close of the song, a shower of orange skins descended upon the luckless performer.

"Next stunt," called Roy, throwing a peanut on the floor. "Get down and push that across the floor with your nose."

Phil, tortured with resentment and embarrassment, yet not daring to rebel, was forced to the floor, and the laborious journey to the end of the room was begun. It seemed to him

there never was such a long room; it was as if the farther wall receded every time he made a bit of progress.

"Go it!"

"Bet you he does it in five minutes!"

"Five minutes! Not he. He'll take all morning."

"Keep your hands off of it."

"You dumb-bell! Why did you let it roll off there?"

"No time out for sneezing!"

These and other cries accompanied his progress, or lack of progress, and after an eternity the end of the room was reached, and Phil got up beside a table at which were seated Nancy, Jeanette, and two other college girls.

Jeanette was distressed at the poor boy's embarrassment, but Nancy jumped up, bowed ceremoniously, and presented him with a doughnut.

Howls of laughter and applause greeted the presentation.

"Down on the floor with you again," ordered Chet, "and scramble like an egg."

Silly, high school stuff! Why, they did that at some high school initiations. But there was nothing to do but comply with their idiotic orders. How he'd like to tell 'em!

Waiters, and all the help of the restaurant had increased the crowd by this time; they were

accustomed to the nonsense of the college people, especially during the early part of the fall term; and amidst shouts of laughter Phil groveled on the floor, trying in vain to carry out all the suggestions given him as to the proper method of "scrambling."

"Now, fellows, we must be off again," said Ben. "Many thanks for your kind hospitality toward us, and your interest in our young friend here," bowing to the crowd.

The bandage and gag were replaced before they got into the car, and the trip was resumed. Several miles were covered; then another halt. Phil was dragged from the machine, a rope tied under his arms, and the gag and bandage removed.

He found himself standing on the edge of a deep sand pit; but before getting a good look at it, he was swinging over the edge, and descending into its depths, as coil after coil of the rope was let out. He finally struck bottom, the rope was cut, and his enemies, with a cheery, "Get home the best way you can," drove off and left him to his fate.

For a few minutes he sat there in his hilly desert, wondering what he could do. Get out he must, in some way; and the only way seemed to be by climbing. Three ledges led to the top. They were somewhat steep, but looked fairly easy, and he began the ascent.

The lowest one gave little trouble, for an embedded tree trunk gave needful stability to the shifting sand. The second, however, presented a problem. A perpendicular wall confronted him, seemingly solid; but the least pressure of hand or foot made it give way. With a desperation born of despair, he tried first one method and then another; but all to no avail. As he sat resting, and digging one hand idly into the sand beside him, he noticed that the underneath layers were a little damp, as if it had rained recently. An idea sprang into being, and he began to construct something like a toboggan slide against the ledge. After an hour's hard work, he succeeded, by means of it, in scrambling onto the second ledge. From this he could see, far above, the spire of a church; and, gaining courage, he attempted the last stage of his journey toward the upper world.

Tough bits of sod furnished handhold here; but the ledge was very steep, and he had to reach up so far and pull so hard, that time after time they gave way, letting him fall back again. Putting forth almost superhuman efforts, he at last succeeded in gaining the top.

For a time he lay there on the grass, quite spent with his struggle; but the necessity of getting home before night aroused him. Look-

ing about, he found himself on the outskirts of some village; for the little church seemed to be far beyond the fields, and at a great distance he could barely distinguish a farmhouse. Toward the latter he directed his steps, and plodded through field after field, only to find the house closed and guarded by a huge, ugly dog which chased him out of the yard.

Then he turned down the road upon which the farmhouse stood; and with pauses to rest, trudged at last into a tiny village, and into the first store to which he came. It was an old, old frame building, with its stairs on the outside, and seemed to contain a little of everything needed by mankind. Behind the counter was a young girl who gazed in astonishment at the dirty, haggard-looking fellow in the dusty clothing.

“Will you please tell me what town this is, and how far from Roxford?” he asked.

“It’s Peterstown, and eighteen miles from Roxford.

Phil staggered slightly, and caught at the counter for support. His struggles in the sand pit, combined with his walk to the village had quite tired him out; and it was a long time since he had had anything to eat.

“Are you ill? Won’t you sit down?” asked the girl.

Phil sank into a chair; and after drinking a glass of water which she brought him, told her something of his adventure.

"Oh, you must be Mr. Spenser then," she said. "I heard my brother telling this noon about the kidnaping of a Freshman of that name. I am also a member of the first year class at Roxford," she added.

Phil looked at her in speechless astonishment; and, as if reading his thoughts, she explained: "My father runs this store, as a branch of the one in Roxford. His clerk wanted the afternoon off; so I came out to take her place. It's difficult to get anyone for a few hours out here; and Jennie is such a nice, faithful girl that I wouldn't let her miss her cousin's wedding if I could help it. Father is going to call for me with the car between half-past five and six, and we'll take you in with us."

"You are very kind," was all Phil could say.

After supplying him with what she could in the way of food, she made him rest in the back room until her duties were over and the car arrived. She outlined the story briefly to her father, and he heartily seconded her offer to take Phil home.

The boy was too tired to say much on the trip to Roxford, and they considerately let him rest. In body only, however, did he rest; for his mind was torturingly active.

Suppose, just suppose, someone should see *him* riding with a co-ed! They'd razz the life out of him after all he had said about co-eds; for he had lost no opportunity to air his views about them. But what luck! This was the time for afternoon football practice, and no one with an atom of sense would be out on a country road when he could be on the side lines. He was a fool to get in such a funk about it. Yet, sometimes Doc Stebbins sent the men of the "B" gym class on a cross-country run. Was it Tuesday or Thursday that they went? It must be on Thursday, and this was Thursday! No, come to think of it, the day had been changed to Friday; so he was safe, at least while in the country. But when they reached the city it would be a different matter. Any or every street might present several of his fellow students; and news like his being seen with one of the hated co-eds would travel fast. He *must* get away from the Mannings before they got anywhere near the college. So when they entered the city, Phil said that, since he did not want to take them out of their way, he would get out of the car then. -

"Just stay right where you are, my boy," replied Mr. Manning, without even slowing up. "No trouble at all to take you right to your boarding house. You said 154 Morris Avenue, didn't you?"

They passed the college just as the fellows poured out after football practice, and many were the nudges and laughs as they spied Phil Spenser riding with a co-ed and her father. Poor, miserable Phil! His worst fears were realized, and he knew it would be many a long day indeed before he would hear the last of it. It was by far the most humiliating of all the experiences of the day. Freshmen were always hazed, and of course he shouldn't have expected to be exempt; but to be seen riding with a co-ed!

He was truly grateful, however, to his rescuers; and when they reached his boarding house he thanked them with all the warmth and grace he could summon. But he was cut short in the midst of his speech by Mr. Manning's blunt, "It's all right, boy. Go in and get something to eat, and then go to bed."

CHAPTER V

THE FRESHMAN MEETING

DID you find the letter I left on your desk this noon, Nan?" asked Jeanette as they met on the steps of Bayard Hall late one afternoon.

"No. Whom was it from? Do you know?"

"Your father."

"Oh."

Jeanette laughed.

"Now, what's the matter?" asked Nancy.

"That 'Oh!' sounded as if you had at least expected, if not preferred, a letter from someone else."

"Well—well—" stammered Nancy. "You see, I never look for a letter from Dad until Thursday. This is only Tuesday, and——"

"You needn't explain," soothed Jeanette. "It's all right, dear. I feel quite sure that Curtis——"

"Who said anything about Curtis?" interrupted Nancy quickly.

"Girls," sternly said a voice behind them, "are not allowed to stand or sit on the steps of Bayard Hall." They turned and saw a tall, upper class girl frowning upon them.

"I'm sorry," began Jeanette. "We didn't know——"

The formidable looking Junior interrupted her. "To what class do you belong? Freshman?"

"We are Sophomores," replied Nancy, quickly and not without a tinge of resentment.

"Report to your Senior officer and have her give you full information regarding the rules for co-eds."

"We did not even know that there was such a person," said Jeanette mildly. "Or any rules."

"You certainly should know by this time."

"Well, retorted Nancy pertly, "whatever officer's business it is to inform us, is most assuredly off her job."

"If you had attended your first class meeting, and paid attention, you wouldn't be quite so ignorant," persisted the Junior.

"But we have had no class meeting," replied Jeanette.

"You haven't! You had better call one immediately, and get straightened out on a few things."

Nancy and Jeanette looked at each other as the stern Junior went down the opposite steps and along the walk toward Ross Hall, in which the chemical laboratories were located.

"Isn't she sweet?" remarked Nancy sarcastically.

"I'm glad, though, that she told us about the steps. Nan, do you know I think there must be other unwritten rules here, and we ought to know them."

"What makes you think there are?"

"Well, one thing: yesterday I was trying to catch up to you before you went in to Bayard Hall. I had your notebook, and I knew you would need it in Rhetoric II. So I ran across the 'Circle' instead of going around by the path." The "Circle" was a large round grass-plot in the center of which was a life-size statue of the founder of the college. It was directly in front of Bayard Hall, the main building on the campus; and the path ran around the circle, not across it. Within the plot were the class trees.

"Well, what of it?" demanded Nancy, rather impatiently. People seemed to make such a fuss over "unwritten rules." It was bad enough to try to keep the written ones!

"There were several men and girls going toward Bayard, and I'm sure they said something about me. A couple of the men looked annoyed, and the girls so—so sort of superior, as if I were a mere insect."

"But about a class meeting," said Nancy, who seemed not at all impressed with Jeanette's

supposition. "Who do you suppose should call one?"

"I'm afraid I know no more about it than you do. Why not talk to some of the girls in the House to-night."

"That's a good idea. I shall."

They had reached their room by that time, and Nan sat down to read her letter.

"Janie!" she burst out when she had finished it. "You remember that very good picture we took of the little dooryard shrine in Beaupré, that I had enlarged and sent to Dad for his birthday?"

"Yes. Didn't he get it all right?"

"He says the picture and wrapping arrived separately! And after all our care in packing too!"

The girls laughed till Clarice Leonard, a Junior who roomed next to them, came in to see what was the matter with them. Nancy gave her a dramatic account of the photograph and its adventures, while Jeanette sat writing at one corner of the desk.

"What are you doing, Jeanette?" asked Clarice, peering over her shoulder, after Nancy had finished her recital. "Oh, do you write verses?"

Jeanette laughed. "Just jingles," she said, handing the paper to Clarice, who read it to Nancy.

NAN'S WRAPPING

Nancy had a picture which
She thought she'd send away
To her father in the West
As a gift, for his birthday.

Afraid she was 'twould break en route
And so she said to me:
"We'll wrap it in excelsior
So it will safer be."

She packed it and she wrapped it
And she tied it round the ends,
And then she put more paper on
And tied and tied again.

And when 'twas ready to go at last
It certainly had grown,
From the size of the small picture
We'd originally known.

She sent it out by parcel post,
And hoped 'twould go all right;
And when her father wrote her next
She giggled with delight.

He said—"My dear, the picture came.
It's very fine indeed;
But as 'twas odd in its receipt
To tell you, I'll proceed.

“The picture came; it was intact
In weight 'twas light's a feather.
The excelsior, it got here too,
But they didn't come together!”

“May I have this?” she asked, when she finished reading.

“Why, yes, I suppose so,” said Jeanette innocently. “It is quite worthless; but if you want it, you may have it; that is, unless Nan objects.” Nancy had no suspicions either; so Clarice departed with the “poem.”

That evening Nancy stopped Dorothy Brown on the porch of the Eta Sigma House, as she came in from the tennis court, and asked if they should have had a class meeting before this time.

“Why, the classes usually have them as soon as possible after college opens,” replied the Senior. “Last year's president should have called one. I'll make a few inquiries, and let you know to-morrow.”

Nancy thanked her, and reported the interview to Jeanette.

“We might as well be thinking,” she went on, “who would make a good president, I suppose. Who do you think?”

“It's very difficult for us to tell, because we know so few of the girls except by sight.”

“That's true; but we know the girls here in

the House; and Esther Moore and Ethel King."

"And Emily Grant and Betty Fuller," added Jeanette.

"And Julia Thompson——"

"She wouldn't do at all," interrupted Jeanette quickly.

"Why not?" demanded Nancy, on the defensive in a minute.

"Because she isn't quite the type of girl to represent a class."

"I think it would be very nice to give her the office," disagreed Nancy decidedly.

"Why?"

"Because she's a stranger here, and so very anxious to make friends. She has a hard time getting along financially, and this office would sort of make up for the things she has to do without; also it would give her a standing with the rest of the girls. Some of them rather snub her, and I think it is because she is poor."

"Now, Nan, I don't want to offend you, or appear to interfere with your friendship; but I'm afraid you are making a big mistake regarding Julia. The reason the girls are unwilling to be chummy with her is, I think, not because she is poor, or because she is a newcomer in the class, but because they do not care for that type of girl; and I must confess that I don't blame them."

"What do you mean by her 'type'?" asked Nancy quickly.

"Don't you really think, Nanny, that she is somewhat pushing, a bit loud, and not quite so refined as most of the other students?"

"No, I don't. I think people are just jealous because she is so good-looking, so talented, and everything. Why, she can dance, sing, play the piano, is good in dramatics, can sketch, and do all kinds of art work. The class ought to be glad to get her."

"Maybe you're right. I don't want to quarrel with you, Nanny; but why don't you wait a little while and see how she takes before you become too intimate with her?"

"Then run after her because she has become popular, I suppose! No. I like her, and, as I said, the others criticize her because they are jealous."

"Don't include me among the envious, Nan. I only want to prevent you from making a mistake. It is a great hindrance to a girl to become associated with the wrong kind of chums. You will run the risk of spoiling your college reputation and chances for all kinds of nice things if you persist in going with someone upon whom public opinion frowns. Don't you see that they will say, 'Birds of a feather'?"

Nancy refused to answer, and turned to her books; and the matter was dropped. An hour

later, Dorothy Brown knocked and entered.

“Nancy, you were asking me about a class meeting. I discovered that last year’s president did not come back to college this fall, and the vice president is in the hospital. It is customary in such a case for a Senior to call the meeting. That duty has fallen upon me; so I shall post a notice first thing to-morrow morning. All you girls had better be thinking, in the meantime, whom you wish for the various offices so as not to prolong the meeting.” She said she was in a hurry, and so she left before the girls had an opportunity to do more than thank her.

Next day the members of the Sophomore class stopped, in two’s and three’s, to read the bulletin which was posted:

ATTENTION—WOMEN OF THE SOPHOMORE CLASS

Assemble at 3:30 Friday in Biology lecture room, third floor, Bayard Hall, for election of officers.

(Signed) DOROTHY BROWN, Senior Pres.

Much quiet electioneering went on in the two days between the appearance of the notice and Friday; and it was an excited, eager group of girls who waited for Dorothy in the lecture room promptly at half-past three. Jeanette, rather anxious and disturbed, sat at the very

back of the room, with quiet, dependable little Esther Moore; but Nancy was in the front row, Julia Thompson clinging closely to her on the left. On her right was Ethel King, a forceful, blond girl who had many amusing hobbies, among them a passion for law and order, in theory. She was, however, the despair of her roommate, Esther, because of her untidiness!

Dorothy stepped onto the platform, and the girls were quiet at once. She explained in a few sentences the reason for her presence, the object of the meeting, and named the "tellers."

"Before nominations begin," she continued, "I want to say that it would be wise for the girls who were in this class all last year, and who, I hope, observed all the unwritten rules of the college, to enlighten the newcomers regarding them. So far this year some of the customs have been violated, but I am sure it was through ignorance. If you will elect your chairman now, I shall leave you to yourselves."

Ruth Graves, former secretary, was immediately chosen, and took charge of the meeting.

The nominating began with the name of Sara Rosenthal.

"Will the girls whose names are proposed, stand up immediately, so the others can see them?" requested Ruth.

Sara was a tall, slender Jewess, who looked very capable of running the affairs of any class.

"Nancy Pembroke," said Julia Thompson.

Nancy stood up, blushing furiously, as everybody stared at her. Many had not even seen her before.

"Marian Stone."

A tall girl, so thin that it seemed as if she might break if anyone touched her, stood up. Her modest, pleasant, yet capable manner, evidently made a good impression on the class, for little nods and approving looks darted about the room.

"Julia Thompson," said Nancy.

There was a dead silence when she arose; and as she sat down again, someone moved that the nominations be closed. It was quickly seconded, and passed; then the balloting began.

The tellers collected the bits of paper, and after careful count, laid the results before the chairman, who announced briefly.

"Marian Stone is elected, and will now take the chair."

The room rang with applause as the blushing girl went up to the platform. The election continued until Ruth Graves was made vice president, Clara Arnold, treasurer, and Helen Pond, secretary.

There was no unfinished business; so Marian immediately asked for new business.

"Madam President!" said Ethel King, rising.

"Miss King has the floor," acknowledged Marian.

"What are we going to do about the Freshmen this year?"

"Suggestions are in order."

So many ideas were offered for the discomfiture of the unfortunate first year students, and if all were adopted they would have effectively discouraged any body of Freshmen, however bold. Finally, after much discussion, it was decided to leave them in peace until Hallowe'en, when a general initiation of the class would take place.

"Let them have their first class meeting without doing *anything?*" asked a voice from the back of the room.

"What do the girls think about that?" inquired Marian.

Everybody talked at once; but the general sentiment inclined to prosecution of some kind; so Marian appointed a committee composed of Ethel King, Fanny Kreig, a mannish girl somewhat older than the others, and Grace Ford, a meek, mild, constantly smiling person, to attend to the matter. Then the meeting adjourned.

"Newcomers in the class are quite shoved aside; aren't they?" Julia observed to Nancy as they went down the two long flights of stairs.

"So it seems," replied Nancy shortly. She

felt very much out of sorts with everybody and everything, and took no part whatever in trying to discover the time and place of the Freshman class meeting, a matter which absorbed the attention of her classmates for several days.

The Junior president called the meeting, the time and place being a secret. One noon Jeanette, who was looking for a mislaid copy of the text used in Rhetoric II, went over to the English classroom in Bayard Hall to see if she had left it there. A couple of Freshmen, who were in the room, looked so frightened while she was searching the benches for her book, that it suddenly occurred to her that she had unconsciously stumbled upon their meeting place. Without paying any attention to them, she went slowly out of the room, and closed the door. Then she fairly raced down the long hall to the girls' rooms in the opposite corner of Bayard Hall.

A few members of her own class were amusing themselves dancing in one room; a few others were in the other room, studying. Skillfully she detached them from the other girls, and they gathered in a corner of the locker room, which separated the other two rooms, and made some hasty plans. It was too late to attempt anything elaborate, but they could not let the occasion pass entirely unnoticed. Fortunately it was a pleasant day; so the men stu-

dents were all out on the campus, or elsewhere; and the halls were deserted. Clever little Jeanette had succeeded in slipping the key out of the lock as she passed out of the English room without the two Freshmen noticing it. She now produced it, and the girls, in subdued whispers, with many glances about them, made their plans. Luckily the Junior president was late in getting to her first year charges, and was in a hurry to get through with the business as quickly as possible. So when one of the Freshmen discovered that the door was keyless, and suggested changing to another room, the upper class girl replied impatiently:

“You’ll be in more danger trooping off to some other room than staying here quietly. None of the Sophomores are around the halls. Put a guard at the door, and let’s get down to business.”

In the meantime, the Sophomores were watching through a crack in the locker room door; and when the Junior president left the English room and went out of the building to join her own friends on the campus, three Sophomores stole softly down the hall. Two of them quietly held the door knob while the other carefully inserted the key in the lock. She turned it before the girls inside, whose attention must have been attracted by the sound, could pull open the door. How or when they got out, their enemies never

knew; but some days later a story went the rounds of the campus to the effect that some girls had been seen dropping out of the high windows of the English classroom to the ground below. Some of the co-eds were *so* undignified! It seemed as if they didn't care what they did!

CHAPTER VI

AN INTENTIONAL MISTAKE

HOPE old Creswell has gone home," murmured Phil Spenser disrespectfully, as he went up the long flight of stairs and down the hall to the laboratory one afternoon to make up some work. "He's a good enough teacher, and keeps order in his classes; but, some way or other, he gives me the heebie-jeebies. Don't see why on earth the fellows insist that I'm his double. For one, I can't see any likeness."

Professor Creswell was a young instructor who looked no older than Phil himself, and who certainly was, as the fellows put it, Phil's double. The strange resemblance that is sometimes seen between two people who bear not the slightest relationship to each other, was present to a marked degree in the case of the young professor and Phil. Could Tom Mixer, Phil's cousin, have had an opportunity to observe Professor Creswell for a few days, he would have seen more than mere physical resemblance; would have said, "Phil, that's the way you acted when you entered college. Re-

member the day I tried to give you some good advice, and how graciously you took it?"

Whether Phil's dislike for the worthy professor was based on these resemblances, or was due to the fact that he was nearly always behind in his work, and therefore forced to spend extra time in the laboratory out of regular hours, or to the necessity of getting a five-hour subject which had driven him into the class, he could hardly have told had he been asked; but the fact remained that he did not *at all* admire the professor of Biology.

The big laboratory was quite empty, and he heaved a long sigh of relief, immediately checked by the thought that the instructor might be in his office, which opened off of the laboratory. He tiptoed to the door, and listened. Not a sound! So he went to the cabinet, took out his microscope, and prepared to work.

"Guess I'll take old Creswell's desk," he thought. "Light's better there. Wouldn't he throw a fit if he could see me!"

Putting a cross section of stem on a slide, and placing a cover glass carefully over it, he inserted it under the microscope, screwed the lens down too far, and smashed the cover glass. Saying unprintable things under his breath, he removed the broken glass and replaced it with a new one. He studied the cross section long and carefully, occasionally making a few notes

in a small notebook; and, from time to time, adding a hesitating line or two to his drawing.

Tiring at last of his occupation, which he had not found particularly interesting, he sat dreaming, his thoughts far away from the laboratory and its troublesome cross sections. So he did not notice the entrance of a girl until she stood right beside him on the platform.

Confound these co-eds!

"Professor Creswell," she asked somewhat plaintively, "are you busy?"

"I'm not—" began Phil.

"I'm so glad," she interrupted, not waiting to hear the rest of his reply, "because I wanted to get a little help from you, if you don't mind."

"I—" began Phil again, but she gave him no chance to continue.

"You see, Professor," she gushed, "I'm so interested in your subject, and I want to do good work in it; but there are a few things we took up this morning that are very difficult for me to understand; so I felt that I just must come to you for a little extra help before writing up my notes. I take great pride in my notebook, you know, and I don't want any mistakes in it."

"Will she ever shut up?" thought Phil, desperately. "I say—" he started; but she went on.

"Now about the Bell Animal. I'm afraid I'm a bit stupid, but I don't understand at all

how it expands to obtain its food. Is that one you have under the microscope now?" and she leaned over his shoulder and peered through the lens.

"Oh, how funny. What is it? See all—"

"I have been trying for the last five minutes to tell you," boldly interrupted Phil, "that you have made a mistake."

"You mean in coming up here? Why, a Senior told me it was all right, and that you often stayed here in the laboratory after classes were over; also that you would be glad to help me. You know I entered just this year, and Roxford's rules are new to me; but I thought a Senior ought to know."

"What I mean is that I am *not* Professor Creswell."

"You're not—" she began in a startled tone. Then, looking at him again, a wave of enlightenment seemed to break over her face.

"Oh, Professor," she gushed; "you're such a tease, trying to deceive and frighten a poor, little, defenseless Sophomore."

"I tell you that I am *not* Professor Creswell," declared Phil most emphatically.

"But—but—you're the professor who teaches the Biology classes. I'm sure of that. Have I mistaken the name?"

"No! I tell you I'm not the professor who teaches the Biology classes, or any other

classes," growled Phil, becoming more angry every minute.

The door leading to the office opened suddenly, and Professor Creswell, who had been disturbed by the sound of voices, stood in the doorway. The girl gave a startled glance from one to the other, gasped, opened her lips as if to speak, and then fled madly down the hall without having said a word.

"Spenser," said the professor crisply, "what business have you and that girl up here? This is a place for work—good hard work in your case—and not a place for petting parties. I want that distinctly understood."

Phil, boiling with rage at the professor's tone, and even more at being accused of petting a co-ed, was for once in his life unable to speak.

"I asked," persisted the instructor, "what business you had here?"

"Came to finish my cross section," replied Phil shortly.

"And you could not finish it without making an appointment with your friend, wasting your time, and disturbing me?"

"Now just look here, Professor Creswell," burst out Phil rising. "I was working here alone, and that girl came in to get some information from you. She persisted in thinking I was you, and I couldn't get rid of her. You

may believe me or not, as you choose; but that's the truth, and the whole truth."

Phil strode from the laboratory and tore down the stairs, leaving a somewhat surprised professor; while naughty Nancy sat in the library, enjoying the joke all by herself. She had seen Phil go to the laboratory, and the much-talked-of resemblance between him and the Biology instructor occurred to her simultaneously. The chance for some fun was too great to be cast aside.

CHAPTER VII

“FELICITY FULLER”

PHIL was sitting in one of the library alcoves one afternoon, with a pile of reference books before him, trying to get material for an overdue essay. Across from him sat a big Sophomore, Mike Marvin, buried in notebook work.

The library, for a wonder, was quiet. The huge Silence signs swung gently on their wires and seemed to fairly beam with satisfaction. Not a sound broke the calm within except the turning of pages, the hurried scratching of pens, and the heavy breathing of the old librarian as he indulged in a secret nap at his desk. From without came the faint sounds of cheering from the distant athletic field, where the team was hard at work, and the occasional honk of an automobile horn as it rounded the circular drive in front of the building.

“The deuce!” exploded Mike, so suddenly and forcibly that Phil jumped, and the librarian sat up and began to write hurriedly, after a furtive glance around to see if anybody had noticed him nodding over his work.

"What ails you?" demanded Phil, annoyed at being so startled.

"Listen. This author says: 'Man is greatly inferior to woman.' And some numskull of a co-ed has written in the margin: 'Very true. For example, see Roxford College any day.' Isn't that the woodchuck's wood?"

"The woodchuck's wood?" repeated Phil in a puzzled tone.

"Yes, you dumb Dora! According to your vocabulary I suppose I should say 'Isn't that strange!' or something equally bromidic."

"Think your're smart, don't you? I knew all the time what you meant," lied Phil, determined, as usual, to let no one get ahead of him.

"Yes, you did!" jeered Mike.

"Well, I did!"

At this point the librarian rapped on his desk and glared in their direction; so the boys hastily ended their argument and worked busily for a while.

"Mike," whispered Phil after a time, "let's take that book."

Mike shoved it across the table, and Phil wrote in the margin under the other marginal note, "Mention a few instances of proof, if you can," and showed it to his companion.

"What's the idea?" he asked.

"Just to see what happens."

"Do you know what will?"

"No. What?"

"Nothing."

"Is that so? Well, I'll bet you a dollar something does."

"It's a go."

The Sophomores being very busy with a few secret plans of their own, Mike saw nothing of Phil for nearly ten days. One morning he happened to meet him near the library during a free hour; and the sight of the building and Phil at the same time reminded him of their bet.

"Hullo, Phil. How did our little bet come out?"

"I won; so hand over the dollar."

"Not so fast, kid; not so fast. Tell me what has happened since last week."

They sat down on the steps of the library, and Phil began his tale.

"The next day I opened Tompkins at page 19, and found: 'The politeness of our male students to co-eds' written below my note."

"Not so bad. Go on."

"I wrote: 'Unnecessary to be polite to co-eds.'"

"Not so good. Then what?"

"In reply, I got: 'Evidently you're not a gentleman.'"

"Then I wrote, 'I am quite willing to show you whether or not I am.'"

"Next day I found, 'All right; do.' And to

this I replied: 'Meet me Saturday afternoon, Elm Walk, at half-past two.' "

"Is that to-morrow?" inquired Mike, with more than usual interest.

Phil nodded.

"Suppose she vamps you? You! The co-ed hater!" And Mike laughed provokingly.

"Fat chance she's got! I guess I can choke off anything of that kind," boasted Phil in his most superior manner.

As Mike left him to go to a class, he laughed so oddly that Phil felt somewhat uncomfortable, but he could hardly have told why.

"By the way, Phil," he turned back to say, "how are you going to know each other?"

"White carnations," was the brief, somewhat impatient reply.

At two o'clock on Saturday, Phil, with a white carnation in his buttonhole, was on his way to Elm Walk, a path which ran across a remote and secluded corner of the campus, when he saw a girl coming toward him. She was so awkward looking that he had all he could do to keep from bursting out laughing. She was so tall and thin that her arms and legs looked wholly out of proportion, and she walked with a peculiar stoop, carrying her head a little to one side. Her dress was very short and tight, her stockings were rolled, and gay orange garters showed below the knee. She wore a tightly

fitting green felt hat, with a drooping brim that partly hid her face; but it showed enough for Phil to see that she was brilliantly rouged. His grin of amusement quickly faded, however, and his jaw dropped, as he caught sight of a white carnation. He had never seen such a looking creature on the campus before. The co-eds were bad enough, but he had never seen one look like this. And yet if she weren't a co-ed, what had she been doing in the library? Phil had a wild desire to turn and flee, but before he had time to pull himself together the girl galloped up to him holding out a big hand, repelling bony even through the silk gloves.

"So this is my library correspondent," she giggled, in a high, strained voice. "Why, you're quite a sheik! What's your name? Mine's Felicity Fuller," she continued, paying no attention to Phil's silence. I have always been grateful to my parents for giving me such a pretty name. What did you say yours is?"

"I didn't say," replied Phil shortly; "but it's Phil Spenser."

"Oh, I just *adore* the name of Philip. I'm going to call you that. I'm sure you won't mind." She smiled coyly at him. Why didn't the big, ungainly creature see that coyness didn't suit her? And why on earth had he ever agreed to meet a girl without knowing what she would be like. This was awful!

“Now how are we going to spend the afternoon?” she asked, apparently nothing daunted by his silence.

Poor Phil! How was he going to get rid of her before anyone saw them together? Then a bright thought came to him. He'd lead her a dance that would tire her out so that she'd be only too glad to go home.

“There's a pond not so far from here that I'd like to have you see.”

“I should just love to go to see it, or go anywhere else with you,” she replied, gazing at him with something in her eyes that made Phil feel silly. Why did she make such an idiot of herself?

He started out at a great pace, and was soon striding across a field. Thank Heavens! They were off the campus at last. The field was full of unexpected holes, and since Felicity insisted upon hanging on his arm, they stumbled more than once, and nearly fell, the girl giving little shrieks of excitement. Soon they came to a fence, and Phil was forced to help her over it.

After much laughter on her part—she certainly seemed to be enjoying herself all right!—and several unsuccessful attempts and more shrieks, she was on the other side. It was necessary now to follow the highway for a short distance, and a few yards farther on she tripped over a big stone and fell flat. Of course, Phil

had to come to her rescue, but it annoyed him because she made no effort at all to help herself. What did she think so funny about it? She was convulsed with laughter, the imbecile! He caught hold of the back of her dress, and hauled her up; but unfortunately the material would not stand such rough handling, and it tore.

"Oh, dear," she squealed, "now you've torn my gown! You'll have to sew it up. I just can't go on this way!"

"Sorry, but I can't sew," he almost growled. "You'll have to fix it yourself."

"But I can't reach it. And you tore it, so you'll have to fix it."

There was nothing for it but to take the needle and thread, which she produced from an immense bag she was carrying, and stand there at the side of the road and sew her up! Luckily it was a little traveled highway at that time of day, and he hoped no one would pass them. The rent was a long one, and he was none too clever with the needle; and he was just halfway down it when an automobile appeared around the curve, and slowed down. Smothered giggles made him glance up quickly to see that in it were three girls, one of them Nancy Pembroke, or, as he always called her, the Doughnut Girl! That's all he needed just now was to have her show up.

"What are you doing?" she inquired sweetly.

"Catching flies!" he snapped.

"You seem to have caught a nice big one."

No reply from Phil; but Felicity was convulsed with laughter. Queer sense of humor some people have!

"Some people are awfully rude," remarked Nancy, "not to introduce their friends."

"And some are awfully rude to stand and watch others uninvited."

"Oh, do we make you nervous? Then we'll go on. I thought perhaps you'd need some help; for at the rate you are sewing that, you'll be at it a long time."

"Well, I don't need any help; nor do I want any."

"You're just as rude as you were when you first came to college. Aren't you?"

"No, I'm not!"

"Then you admit that you *were* rude when you came?"

Phil didn't know what to say next, even if he could have made himself heard above the general laugh that followed Nancy's remark. In his agitation, he ran the needle in Felicity. She jumped and gave vent to some exclamation which didn't sound ladylike, and this was followed by another burst of laughter from the party in the auto.

"Well," said Nancy, as they started on, "I only hope you'll finish in time to get to class on Monday morning. Good-by, Sir Lancelot."

"I should think you might have introduced me to your friends," observed Felicity in an injured tone.

"They're not my friends," he snapped.

"That was the Doughnut Girl; wasn't it?" she continued, ignoring his ill humor. It seemed impossible to squelch the creature. "Be careful. You stuck that needle into me again." As Phil disdained to reply, she went on, "I heard some of the fellows call her that; and when I asked why she had such a queer name, they told me about some awfully conceited Freshman whom they were hazing at the *Porcelain Duck*, and she gave him a doughnut as a prize for a peanut race. It must have been the funniest thing to see him crawling along the floor of that swell restaurant, pushing a peanut with his nose!" And she went off into peals of loud laughter.

"For Heavens' sake, can that!" commanded the flushed, exasperated Phil. "How the devil can I ever get this d—this tear fixed if you howl like that?"

"Oh, Philip! Such language. I fear you're a very naughty Freshman."

Phil made the last two stitches at least three inches long, broke the thread, and started off

again toward the pond. They arrived at their destination without further mishap, and walked around the small sheet of water known as Willow Pond, Felicity hanging on his arm and exclaiming over the beauties of Nature and the joy she was experiencing in beholding them under his guidance. Going close to the edge, to pick some jewel weed, she slipped a little; and while she managed to save herself from falling, poor Phil was not so fortunate. In he went, and at that moment the bushes at the other side of the pond parted, and there were the three girls from the auto.

"Why, Mr. Spenser," called Nancy, "isn't it a little late in the season for bathing? The water must be pretty cold."

Phil's one desire was to get out of the pond as soon as possible; but on one side was his tormenter, Nancy, with her friends, and on the other stood Felicity wailing, and wringing her hands.

"Oh, Philip! Please don't get drowned! Can't you get out? What shall I do? What shall I do?"

"For Heavens' sake, shut up!" shouted Phil at last, when Felicity began to weep aloud, and the girls on the other side were convulsed with laughter. He finally walked out on the side on which Felicity was waiting; but no sooner had he wrung a little of the water out of his clothes,

than he found the auto and its occupants close beside him.

"You really must let us take you home," said Nancy in mock solicitude.

"I prefer to walk."

"But we couldn't think of letting you. You'd surely catch cold, and maybe die; and then what would your class do?"

"Yes, Philip," said Felicity. "Let us go in the auto. I'm so tired, and you're so wet; and anyway auto riding is much nicer than walking. Since Mr. Spenser doesn't introduce us, Miss Dough—Miss Pembroke, I must introduce myself. I'm Felicity Fuller."

"These are Miss Emily Morton and Miss Ada Smith," said Nancy, turning to her friends; then she added wickedly, "I'm sure none of you need an introduction to the famous Mr. Spenser."

Felicity fairly forced Phil into the auto, and promptly sat between him and Nancy, where she chattered foolishly all the way home.

"Where shall I leave you, Miss Fuller?" asked Adelaide Smith, who was driving.

"At the corner of Melrose Street, but please take Mr. Spenser home first. I'm so afraid he'll take cold."

"No—no, I'll get out right here, and cut home the back way," protested Phil, trying to extricate himself from the back seat. But he was

too firmly wedged, and Miss Smith put on speed, saying, "I wouldn't think of such a thing, Mr. Spenser. I'm much honored in being able to do anything for such a famous member of the entering class."

Right down the main street she drove, meeting dozens of students who were coming out of stores and tea rooms, or idly strolling along, window shopping. All stared in great amusement and astonishment at the queer company in the auto. To finish the episode properly, she took a short cut through the campus, and displayed poor Phil, with Felicity and his Doughnut Girl, to groups of tennis players, and to a crowd of fellows smoking and singing on the Gym steps. When they reached his boarding house, he muttered something under his breath. It might have been thanks, or it might have been something unprintable; then he rushed into the house and locked himself in his room.

All day Sunday he kept close to the house, hoping against hope that by Monday the college world would have forgotten Saturday's affair. By eight o'clock Monday, his natural confidence in himself and his ability to carry off almost any situation revived, and he set out boldly for his early classes. His progress to college and through the campus was marked by broad grins, sly whispering, loud razzing, slaps on the shoulder, and questions of all kinds,

which he scorned to answer. The day was one of torture; for no one spared him. As soon as the day's work was over, he took refuge in his room, where Mike Marvin found him about eight o'clock.

"Found a note for you; so I thought I'd bring it along."

"Thanks," grunted Phil, taking it rather ungraciously from Mike's hand. As he read, a look of great perplexity spread over his face, and his frown grew deeper.

"What's up?" inquired Mike.

Without answering, Phil handed over the following note:

MR. SPENSER:

I should like to know why you make dates only to break them. This is another of the "examples" for which you inquired.

(Signed)

YOUR LIBRARY CORRESPONDENT.

"Gosh, Phil, what does she mean?"

"Blamed if I know. Where did you get this?"

"From Tompkins, page 19. You evidently didn't go to the library to-day to look in your post office."

Phil shook his head.

"What are you going to do about this?" inquired Mike anxiously.

"Don't know yet."

"I'll tell you! Why not go into the alcove next to the one where Tompkins is and wait until your unknown correspondent comes along; then show her this note, and ask her what she means."

"I might, at that."

"I'll come in to-morrow night to hear how you came out. So long." And Mike was gone.

Early next evening he returned, and seating himself in Phil's most comfortable chair, ordered, "Shoot!"

"I did as you suggested," said Phil slowly. "About ten-thirty who should come along, enter the east alcove, and take down Tompkins, but that little devil Nancy Pembroke."

"Otherwise known as the Doughnut Girl."

"Yes, confound her! She's always getting me into some kind of a fix."

"Well, go on. What did you do?"

"I walked in after her, pulled out the note, and showed it to her. She read it, looked at me, and said 'Yes?' And I stood there feeling like a fool, as usual."

Mike exploded into one of his big laughs.

"Can that!" ordered Phil, thoroughly annoyed. "Do you want all the fellows on this floor flocking in here?"

"I'll be quiet. Go on."

"She looked me up and looked me down in that impudent way of hers and said, 'You think

you're very smart, don't you? Making a date with a girl and then not showing up?' 'But I did show up,' I replied. 'I didn't see anything of you when I got to the Elm Walk, and I was right on time, too,' she snapped. 'Not so fast, young lady,' I said. 'Sit down and listen to my tale.' 'I prefer to stand,' she retorted. 'Well you'll sit,' I said, determined not to let the little shrew have her way all the time. I pulled out a chair and firmly but forcibly seated her in it. Up she jumped like a Jack-in-the-box. 'Keep your hands off me!' she cried, giving me a push that nearly made me lose my balance. 'If you have an apology to offer, come to my house and present it like a gentleman, if you are one, which I very much doubt.' And she flew the coop."

"She is a little devil, isn't she?" said Mike slowly.

"I'll tell the world! Think I'll go over there to-night and make her listen to me."

"Go over where?"

"To her house, wherever it is," replied Phil, impatiently.

"Oh, don't you know where it is?" asked Mike in apparent surprise. "It's on the corner of High and Weld Streets, and you'd better start now if you're going to-night. It's nearly nine o'clock. So long and good luck."

Mike immediately headed for his Frat House,

and burst in upon a group of his brothers, sitting about the library table.

"What do you know about it, fellows! The best ever—" and he doubled up with laughter.

"What on earth's the matter with you?" demanded the crowd.

"You know—" and off he went into another spasm.

"Stop that howling, and tell us the joke," ordered one of the Seniors.

"Phil Spenser has gone—" gasped Mike, throwing himself into a chair.

"Gone where?" demanded a fat, jolly-looking Junior, who went by the name of Jubs.

"To call— call—" and once more Mike doubled up.

"For Heaven's sake, choke him, somebody," complained a serious Senior from a corner where he was at a desk trying to compose a few choice verses to his Sheba. One of the men collared Mike, and shook him with none too generous hands, while another threw water in his face.

"Snap out of it, and tell us what the young fool has gone to call, Prexy or the Fire Department."

"Neither," said Mike, wiping his face. "Get away from me and let me alone, or I won't tell you any more; and it's worth hearing."

"That would be a relief," muttered the poetical Senior to himself.

With many a fresh outburst of laughter, Mike managed to tell them the story of Phil's library experience and its sequel, and ended up with, "And now he had gone to call on the Doughnut Girl, and she lives at the Eta Sigma House."

"No!" cried the fellows in unison. "You're giving us a good time."

"Honest to goodness! I told him where she lives, and he thinks it's her home. And, fellows, he never caught on that I was Felicity! Wouldn't that take the curl out of your Karakul coat?"

"Too bad we can't witness the call," observed Tom Keating.

"Why shouldn't we?" asked someone. "Let's go."

The proposal met with instant approval, and half a dozen Sophomores rose as a man.

The evening was rather warm. The shades of the Eta Sigma House were up, and the windows open. The six fellows stole quietly up the walk, and could see Phil seated in the reception room, alone, and with his back to the windows. By bending almost double, the Sophs managed to creep softly up the steps and along the porch until they were directly under the liv-

ing room windows. Some large trees cast heavy shadows over that part of the porch; so they would not be likely to be seen from the outside.

Nancy Pembroke, in a pretty rose dinner gown, entered the room and saw, in the foreground, a rather flushed young member of the Freshman class; and in the background a row of men's faces along the window sill. Each Soph put his finger on his lips, and shook his head at her. Being possessed of strong nerves and great presence of mind, she paid no attention to them, having quickly recognized most of them.

"Well, you wanted to see me?" she inquired pertly of Phil.

"You told me to come to see you; so here I am," replied Phil, with all the assurance in the world.

She looked puzzled and shook her head as if she could not remember anything about such an invitation. The row of heads at the window shook slowly too.

"Now look here," said Phil, getting bolder. "Don't you pretend you don't remember this morning in the library, when I showed you your note?"

"Seems to me, now that you recall it, I did say something about your presenting an apol-

ogy to me.” She suddenly covered her lips with her handkerchief, for the row of heads at the window nodded violently.

“I have no apology to offer, naturally, for I did nothing to render one necessary,” began Phil proudly. “I kept that date I made with you——”

“By going off with another girl,” she interrupted.

“I did not——” he began.

“Oh, then did she go off with you?”

“Yes, she did,” snapped Phil. “Now, just listen to me for a minute or two, if you can, without butting in.”

Nancy put up her hand and pinched her lips shut with thumb and forefinger; and the row at the window did likewise.

“I didn’t know whom I was to meet, and when I saw that fool of a girl with a white carnation, and she came up and literally threw herself on me, how was I to know that she wasn’t the right girl?”

“Now stop right there, Mr. Spenser. I’ve heard quite enough when you begin calling my friends fools.”

“She’s—she’s not a—friend of your’s!” stammered Phil.

“She certainly is.”

“Why, you didn’t seem to know her Saturday.”

"That makes no difference; friendships ripen fast in college sometimes. I won't have her called a fool by anybody, least of all by you."

The lips at the window said silently but emphatically, "Oh, no!"

"However," she continued, "you went off with the first girl you saw, and left me in the lurch; so some of my friends took pity on me and asked me to go for a drive. And we had lots of fun," she added wickedly.

"At my expense," exploded Phil, who was getting madder every minute. Then as a sudden thought struck him, "I'll bet my month's allowance that you framed up the whole business!"

"Oh—o—o—o," a long-drawn wail from without.

Phil jumped. "What's that?" he demanded.

"Some owls, I imagine," she replied, glancing toward the window, which was empty then.

"But why should you suspect poor innocent me of such unkindness?" she continued, returning to the subject under discussion.

"Because it would be just like you."

"You flatter me, Sir Lancelot," bowing low. "To satisfy your curiosity, though, I'll tell you that I had nothing to do with the affair."

"Why, under Heaven, do you call me Sir Lancelot?"

"Didn't you ever read the *Idylls of the King*?" she inquired, in surprise.

"Of course I did, in high school," contemptuously.

"Surely, then, you've not forgotten how Lancelot loved the ladies, and how chivalrous he was to them?"

Even Phil's conceit couldn't make him believe that she wasn't making fun of him; and he vowed that sometime, somewhere, some way he'd get the better of her.

At this point, six grim-looking Sophomores filed into the room.

"Spenser," the spokesman demanded sternly, "what are you doing here?"

"None of your business!" he answered hotly. "What do you mean by butting in on a private call?"

"Freshmen aren't allowed to make calls in sorority houses. So come along."

"Sorority houses! I've never been in one in my life, and I never shall be."

The whole crowd roared.

"Why this is the Eta Sigma House you're in right now. Don't act so innocent."

Phil wilted; and he was dragged ignominiously out by his captors. As punishment for disobeying rules, of which he had known nothing, he was sentenced to appear the following night before the Soph court.

Nancy ran upstairs, and with much laughter told the story of Phil's call to Jeanette and a group of girls gathered in their room.

After they were in bed that night, Jeanette said rather hesitatingly, "Aren't you being rather unkind to Mr. Spenser, Nan, carrying it a bit too far? It must be hard to be picked on so constantly as that poor boy seems to be."

"He needs the conceit taken out of him," retorted Nancy. "Don't you remember all the stories Tom Mixer told me about him? I'm really a blessing in disguise to the infant."

Nancy could always get the better of her chum in an argument; so Jeanette said no more. Probably the boy was well able to look after himself without her worrying over him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRAFFIC COP

PHILIP was not the only one who got into trouble over the episode of his call at the sorority house. The next day Nancy was severely reproved by the Seniors for letting a man call upon her without getting permission from the head of the chapter. There were some strict rules governing under class girls in the sorority house; and for a couple of days Nancy was too busy thinking over her own humiliation to bother about anybody's else.

By Saturday afternoon, however, she had so far recovered her spirits as to start out on a shopping trip. She asked Jeanette to accompany her, but Jeanette was too busy getting out a theme due the following Monday. Jeanette always got her themes, and everything else, in fact, in on time. But nearly everybody else in Roxford seemed to have selected that same bright, cool day to shop, for there was a big crowd uptown. When Nancy reached the corner of Main and Salem Streets, there was a regular blockade. Forcing her way to the edge

of the curb, she soon discovered why so many people were standing at that particular spot. Back and forth across that busiest crossing in Roxford, Phil Spenser was weaving his way, escorting pedestrians from one curb to the other. On either side of the street stood a Sophomore guard, to see that Phil kept on his job. As soon as any lady started to cross, Phil was obliged to go up to her, offer his arm, and, if she accepted, escort her safely to the opposite side. He wore a full dress suit, with the green cap that all the first year men had to wear, purple socks, an orange tie, and on his right arm and left leg were tied huge bows of flaming red ribbon.

Nancy's eyes began to dance, and the next time Phil came to the side on which she was standing, she stepped forward and took his arm. He would have given anything he owned to be able to refuse to pilot her; but the Sophomores were watching—he didn't dare.

"Did they drop you from college?" she inquired, as they started out.

"No. Why?"

"I thought perhaps they had, since you seem to have the traffic cop's job."

"It's all your fault," growled Phil.

"My fault? How do you get that way?"

They were on the opposite curb by that time,

and there was no chance to reply; so Nancy wickedly decided to go back again.

"Wait a minute," she said. "I'm going over to the other side."

"You just came from there."

"I don't care if I did. I can go back again if I want to."

The Sophomore observed that there was a controversy, and interfered. "What's the matter, Madam?" he inquired, as gravely as if he had never seen Nancy before.

"The new traffic cop doesn't seem to want to take me back again," she explained, equally grave.

"Spenser," ordered the Soph sternly, "take this lady back and forth as many times as she wishes to cross; that is, unless you want a week or two at this job."

"Thank you," murmured Nancy, smiling up demurely at the big second year man.

"Don't mention it," he replied, saluting.

So back Phil and Nancy went.

"What do you mean by saying it was my fault?" she asked, continuing their interrupted conversation.

"By asking me to call at your sorority house. You must have known it was forbidden."

"What's that got to do with this new job of yours?"

They had reached the other side of Main Street, and Phil disengaged his arm; but Nancy objected.

"I'm going back. I'm not trying to be unpleasant, but I want an answer to my question; and I suppose your bosses won't let you stand a minute. Then, too, if you must escort someone, it might better be I than a stranger."

Realizing that it was useless to protest, poor Phil started the return trip.

"If you must know, confound you, this 'new job' as you term it was assigned by the Sophomore court for infraction of rules regarding first year men calling at sorority houses," exploded her escort.

"Oh, I see."

"Pretty near time you did."

"Well, I'll leave you now. Good luck, Sir Lancelot."

Nancy finished her shopping, and in about an hour returned to the corner of Main and Salem streets. Phil was still at it, and she simply couldn't resist the temptation to plague him a little further; so she presented herself as the next to cross.

"Ye gods!" he cried, "You back again? You do like to ride a fellow, don't you?"

"I always did love to have the cop take me across the street," she laughed impudently in his face.

"Just you wait, young lady. Some day——"

"Yes? You arouse my curiosity."

"Now I suppose you're going back again?" as they reached the opposite curb.

"Not just now," she replied sweetly. "Thank you."

For a while she stood back of the crowd and watched, doing some rapid thinking in the interval. Perhaps she was going a little too far with the comics; but her love of mischief would get the better of her. There was something almost pathetic in the way he had said, "You do like to ride a fellow, don't you?" She went up to the big Soph guard and touched him on the arm. "I want to ask a favor of you."

"Anything you wish, even if it's half of my cigarette," was the gallant reply.

"I don't feel very well; have an awful headache coming on, and I'm afraid to go home alone."

"I'll take you home. Have my car in the parking station right around the corner."

"No, please. I must walk so as to keep in the open air and have exercise, you know——"

"Then I'll walk with you."

"Thank you; you're very kind, but I'd rather have someone I know. I don't feel like being with strangers when one of these headaches comes on; so I want to know if you won't let

Mr. Spenser go with me. Please," she added, as the man hesitated.

"I'd like to accommodate you, but you see he's being disciplined, and——"

"I know, but I'm sure you have it in your power to let him off, and he *has* been disciplined considerably, don't you think?" Nancy used a deadly combination of pathetic and appealing look, but her eyes twinkled. Jim Hatch, who had heard of Nancy through several sources, caught on at once.

"I suppose I could, to oblige you," he began slowly.

"Oh, thank you very much. I'll never forget your kindness. And just one thing more, won't you lend him your raincoat? You see, I hate to go all through town with him dressed as he is."

"Certainly. Wouldn't embarrass you for worlds."

"Spenser," he stopped Phil as he came toward them, "put on my raincoat and walk home with this lady. She doesn't feel well."

"Have you far to go?" he asked Nancy.

"Yes, quite a distance; and I'm a very slow walker," she added plaintively.

"Then you're excused for the rest of the day, Spenser."

Nancy gave him a dazzling smile as she mur-

mured her gratitude, and started down Main Street, Phil walking beside her, somewhat dazed by the strange turn affairs had taken. As the girl remained silent, Phil finally stole a look at her. She did look rather ill; her mouth drooped pitifully at the corners, her eyes were heavy, and she swayed a little as they walked along. Once in a while she put her hand to her head.

"Want a Bromo Seltzer, or anything?" he finally asked, grudgingly.

"Oh, no, thank you," she murmured faintly. "I'll be all right."

Another long silence.

"What was her game," wondered Phil. "How many of the fellows will we meet? I'll never hear the last of this. Still, I got out of further crossing duty, and that's worth something. Wonder what kind of a story she cooked up to make Hatch let me off. Perhaps she really is sick. Suppose she faints, or something. I'll be in a devil of a mess then. Wish she'd walk faster; we'd get home quicker."

But Nancy didn't hurry; she was enjoying the walk in company with the college co-ed hater, even though he wasn't very sociable.

"What?" he asked, realizing that she had spoken to him.

"There is a bench part way down the bank

over there. Do you mind if we sit down and rest a moment before we go any farther?"

They were passing through a small park along the bank of the river. What could he do but grunt an assent, and follow her to the spot she sought out? With a little sigh of pain she sank down on the bench hidden behind some clumps of bushes. Putting one arm on the back of the seat, she rested her head on it, and closed her eyes. Phil sat bolt upright at the other end of the bench, looking straight ahead at nothing in particular. She was so very still that at last he turned and looked at her. If she only weren't a co-ed; she wasn't so bad looking. She seemed so like a little kid, sitting there with her eyes closed. Suddenly the eyes opened, and she smiled a tiny, pathetic smile, saying, "I must have been nearly asleep. These headaches make me frightfully sleepy, and after a nap I'm nearly always O.K. again."

"Do you know," she continued, as he made no reply, "I ought to be very angry with you."

"Oh, you ought," he said sarcastically. "And may I ask why?"

"Because you got me into an awful fix Thursday night."

"I got *you* into a fix! If that doesn't take the brown derby! You know right well that it was *you* who got *me* into trouble."

"Now just a minute; let me tell you something. There isn't any rule prohibiting Freshmen from calling at sorority houses——"

"But then why—" began Phil.

"Some of the Sophomores must have seen you go in, or somebody told them you were there, and they decided to do a little hazing. Sophomores are always doing that sort of thing. I really would not have told you to come if I had not been sure that it was all right, as far as you were concerned. I really wouldn't purposely get you into serious trouble."

"Oh, no, you wouldn't! Tell that to——"

"Honest, I wouldn't. Of course, you needn't believe me if you don't want to," with a dejected little sigh.

"How is it that you know all about the rules? Ten chances to one you're making all this up."

"You are really very insulting, but I'm going to be magnanimous and inform you that what I don't know about rules isn't worth knowing."

"Hate yourself; don't you?"

"No more than you do," she laughed, determined not to let herself get angry.

"Well, like all women, especially co-eds, you've gone off on a tangent. You started to

tell me how I got you into trouble; and I imagine that might be interesting."

Nancy laughed to herself over having so far aroused his curiosity as to make him ask her to continue her story

"Why, there is a strict rule in the sorority forbidding under class girls to have men callers without permission from the head of the chapter. Sometimes it's given; sometimes it isn't. And sometimes when it is, one of the Seniors goes down with the girl and stays to chaperon her. You see, I thought that might happen to me; so I just didn't say anything about a caller."

"What would have been the difference?" inquired Phil bluntly.

"Well," said Nancy slowly, looking down at her hands, "well, if you must know, I wanted to get acquainted with you. You see," she added, "I've heard a lot about you."

"You have?" said Phil, falling easily for the implied flattery. "Where?"

"I'll never tell," she laughed provokingly.

"Very well," he replied stiffly, too proud to urge her.

"So," she continued, in a sweet, gentle tone, for she saw that she annoyed him, and that was far from her purpose, "well—I'll not tell you what some of the Seniors said to me, but

I admit that I'll never, never have callers again without permission."

"Not even me? That is, if I happened to come again?"

"We—ll," slowly, tipping her head to one side, "I'd have to give that a great deal of serious consideration."

A surreptitious glance at her watch showed that they had been in the park nearly an hour, and she congratulated herself on having been able to hold the interest of the college co-ed hater so long. Better not overdo it the first time; so rising reluctantly, she observed:

"My head is lots better, thanks to you. Now I think I'll run and catch that car coming along North Street, and go on home. Thanks, heaps."

She was gone.

He watched her run lightly through the park, across the street, and catch the car just as it reached the park entrance. She wasn't so bad, after all, when she chose to behave herself. The little imp!

Later in the evening he was greatly annoyed, while trying to study, to have a pert, laughing little face keep popping up over the top of his book; and he finally threw the volume aside in disgust, and gave himself over to daydreams.

CHAPTER IX

THE "HOP-TOGETHER"

IT WAS a long-established custom at Roxford to have a "hop" during the fall term, and this affair was in charge of the Seniors. It was a sort of general get-together for the college people of both sexes, and had become known as the "Hop-Together."

Coming along in front of Bayard Hall one afternoon, Phil met Clink and Hurst who had just come from the office of the president. They were far too downcast to notice Phil; and for a few minutes the three walked abreast in silence.

"Well," said Phil at last, what's the matter? Been flunked out, or what?"

"Oh," exploded Hurst, "there's the devil to pay about the Hop."

"What's the row?" asked Phil.

"Some of last year's patronesses kicked about the expense."

"Well, what's that got to do with this year?"

"Why, Prexy made inquiries and found out that the high price of tickets was caused, as he put it, by foolish extravagance in decoration,

favours, etc. So he made up his mind that it would not occur again; and you know, or rather you don't know yet, Prexy when he has made up his mind. He asked for the details of all our plans, and vetoed half of them. It will be a regular frost, and last year's committee will have it over us like a tent."

"Couldn't you make him see reason at all?"

"Listen to the infant!" jeered Clink. "Fat chance! He said he had noticed a spirit of one-outdo-the-other for a long time in social affairs of the college, which he did not like at all; and he had heard widespread criticism from outsiders about the reckless extravagance of college dances; and he'd fully made up his mind, or, as he put it, 'determined,' to put a stop to it. He said such a display was bad form, and was financially hard on the majority of the students, besides provoking unfavorable comment from the patrons of the college."

"What are you going to do?"

"Wish I knew. I'd like to call the whole thing off if I could."

"But you wouldn't want to be the only class to omit the Hop."

"No; nor do we want to be laughed at for having given a high school affair."

"What did Prexy cut?"

"The supper; we can have only a light lunch; band must give place to an orchestra of

not more than five pieces; fellows do the decorating instead of having a professional. Might as well have a baby party in the afternoon; serve cake and milk, and have paper caps for favors!"

"Every bit of our planning to do over again. We must go down to Belland's right away, Clink, and change our order."

It showed how badly cut up the two Seniors were to have discussed their difficulties so openly with a Freshman. But they knew Phil pretty well, and were quite ready to accept sympathy from anyone. They were just about to leave Phil, when Hurst called:

"Oh, wait a minute, Phil. You're going to the Hop, aren't you? Got a dance or two left? I want one for my lady."

"Got the fifth; that do?"

"Yes; save it for me."

After the first disgust and discouragement had worn off, the Seniors discovered that they could get up a dance of which they need not be ashamed, and keep within the restrictions placed by the president.

The night of the Hop arrived. The big Gym was ablaze with lights, and autos were beginning to roll up to the door. The tuning of instruments could be heard within the building, and the gallery which encircled the main floor was already partly filled with spectators. The

dressing rooms off of it were occupied by gayly attired girls, putting the last touches to their costumes and their faces. In the large square rooms on either side of the entrance, waiters were hurrying about, setting the little round tables; and the Gym proper was dotted with little groups of men and girls. Now and then a black-coated figure would disengage itself and half run, half slide across the floor to a different group, to secure another dance or a coveted introduction. The scene grew more animated. Men darted in all directions. As soon as a girl entered, she was either claimed at once by her host, and proudly introduced to his friends, or was captured by some lively group, where she stood arm in arm with the other girls. In each corner was a fraternity booth, gay with its insignia on pillows and pennants. Already these little retreats were being sought out by those who wished a cozy chat. From the palm-banked stage the orchestra was beginning the preliminary overture. As soon as Phil entered with pretty Eleanor Banks, a niece of Mrs. Mason's, who had been assigned to him by Hurst as his charge, Hurst hurried over to them to check up on the dance promised to his guest.

"She will be rather late in getting here," he said, "but she knows she is to have the fifth with you, and as soon as she comes I'll trot her over to you."

The first four dances seemed very short to Phil, and at the beginning of the fifth he found Hurst at his elbow.

"Miss Pembroke," he was saying, "allow me to present Mr. Spenser. Mr. Spenser, Miss Pembroke," and with a broad grin Hurst hurriedly departed.

How Phil ever acknowledged the introduction and got the girl out onto the floor, he never knew. He'd kill Hurst when he got hold of him! He knew Phil didn't want to dance with co-eds, and this particular one of all the others. He'd played a dirty trick on him. He'd——"

"I beg your pardon," he murmured, vaguely conscious that the girl was addressing him, "Oh, yes, the decorations are pretty."

"That isn't what I said; but no matter, we can talk about the decorations. How sweet the orange and white bunting looks coming from the gallery railing to that big rosette in the center of the ceiling," she continued. "Don't you admire Mr. Hurst immensely? I think he's just lovely; and he's been so nice to me since I entered college. But, of course, you needn't tell him."

Evidently she had decided to ignore the past completely.

"If she'd talk less, maybe she could dance better," he thought critically. Three times he was forced to murmur an apology for stepping

on her feet, though he knew it was not *his* fault. As a matter of fact Nancy was not dancing very well, though she couldn't tell why. She was a good dancer, and so was Phil; she had observed that. But for some reason or other they weren't making a "go" of it together; and she began to feel a bit weary. Phil, on his part, was taking none of the blame. "I can't hold my feet up forever until she gets ready to take hers out from under 'em," he growled to himself.

Toward the end of the dance, the big rosette in the center of the ceiling opened, and a shower of artificial buttercups, the college flower, fell upon the dancers, while from the gallery a golden light was thrown over the whole scene.

"How lovely!" breathed the girl. "Where does the light come from?" twisting and craning her neck in order to see for herself. A misstep on his part, as they turned in the center of the Gym, and a thrust of her foot as she tried to get her balance, caught her partner off his guard and both sprawled on the floor. Scarlet with anger, chagrin, embarrassment, and a dozen other emotions, Phil sprang to his feet and helped up his partner. A crowd of other dancers pressed about them to see if they were hurt, and underneath the thin veil of polite concern on their faces, Phil could see the almost overpowering desire to howl with laugh-

ter. Assuring them that they were quite uninjured, Phil led the girl quickly into one of the empty cozy corners.

Nancy was so distressed and embarrassed that she was beside herself. "You clumsy creature," she cried, "you've just spoiled my evening. I can never face that crowd again."

Phil knew that he ought to try to pacify her, but words would not come from between his set lips. Finally, she turned to him and said icily, "Will you please send Mr. Hurst to me."

Phil rose, saying conventionally, "I'm very sorry that it happened." Then he added with more spirit, "but it wasn't my fault any more than it was yours. You tripped me." And with that he departed in search of Hurst.

He found Hurst in the smoking room, enjoying a cigarette between dances, and with a curt word of explanation he sent him to Nancy; while Phil grabbed his hat from the cloak room, and fled into the night.

Cursing Hurst, the girl, himself, everybody, for the terrible humiliation of the evening, he tramped several miles, trying to work off the intense shame and anger which seemed ready to consume him. He, the co-ed hater, who had boasted of never paying one any attention in public, to have been forced into a dance with one. That was bad enough; then to think it had to be the snip who had made such an idiot

of herself and him before. She'd made a fool of him all through the dance, too. No one would ever suspect that he was really a good dancer, to see him with her; and then that awful fall! And Phil quickened his pace, as if trying to escape from the bitterly mortifying recollection which relentlessly pursued him.

When he was at last ready to turn his steps toward home, for the first time the remembrance of Eleanor Banks came to him. He had rushed off and left her at the Gym with no word or explanation, and, worse still, no provision for getting her home. Calling himself all the names in the dictionary, he headed for the Gym and forced his weary feet to travel as fast as they could. When he arrived at his destination, he found that all the fellows and girls had gone, most of the lights were out, and even the belated waiters were preparing to go home.

Back to his boarding house he tore, only to find all in darkness, with the exception of a dim light showing under Mrs. Mason's door. Plucking up courage, he knocked softly, and the lady herself opened the door.

"Mrs. Mason," he asked breathlessly, "is Eleanor home?"

"Yes; she came in with Mr. Hurst an hour ago, and is now sound asleep."

"I managed to miss her some way, and when

I went back she was gone. Terribly worried, and awfully sorry," he panted.

"Well, she's all right, and you had better go to bed yourself. You look like a wreck."

He threw himself on the bed so worn out by fatigue and emotion that he slept heavily half the next day. When he awakened, he found, pushed under his door, the following note:

MY DEAR MR. SPENSER:

I am taking the eleven thirty train home. Aunt Marian said you looked so done up last night that she wouldn't call you this morning; so I'll have to write my thanks for your invitation to the Hop, and for a most enjoyable time. Auntie said you were worried about having left me to Mr. Hurst, but it was all right. He found me during the ninth dance, and took me out to supper, explaining that you were not feeling well and had gone home, leaving me to him to look after. I was sorry you had to leave so early, but you must not worry about my not having taken it in the right way. It was not your fault, and Mr. Hurst looked after me very well.

Sincerely,
ELEANOR BANKS.

What a brick Hurst had been after all; and the girl too! How much or how little she really knew, Phil could not decide from her note; but at all events he was thankful she had

gone, and he would not have to face her again for some time. Mighty decent of Hurst to cover things up for him and look out for the girl; but, after all, it was the least he could do after playing him such a nasty trick.

One thing he decided he would *not* stand for, and that was the unmerciful razzing such as he had endured from the fellows on previous occasions. So, upon their first meeting that day, after expressing his thanks to Hurst for his thoughtfulness, he added a few forceful words as to the advisability of silence about the whole affair; and these, passed on by Hurst who really felt a bit sorry for the boy, checked all comments on the subject from the other fellows. The girls, unfortunately, could not be so effectively silenced; and many a time Phil was conscious that some co-ed was pointing him out as the "fellow who let Nancy Pembroke fall at the Hop, and then fell right on top of her, my dear."

Several months later, when the Yearbook was published, some daring member of the college, in an account of the Hop, referred to the "unusual artistic beauty of the affair, and the many surprises which were provided in the way of entertainment, especially one Freshman act which was not on the program."

CHAPTER X

THE FLAG RUSH

GRANGE, we haven't seen any of the Frosh around this morning. Suppose they've gone?" asked Roy Thompson of his chum, Granger Evert, as the two Sophomores were on their way across the campus to the eight fifteen class one morning in late October.

"No. Jim and his bunch have been trailing them for ever so long; and he said yesterday that there is no sign yet of any banquet plans. Jim's cousin is president of the class of 19—, you know, and it's a cinch for him to keep tabs on Carl. He's such a green youngster, too, that Jim says it's like taking a bottle away from the baby to get things out of him."

"He might fool him some day."

"Not he!"

"I'll tell you it won't be any joke, Grange, if we let them slip out of our hands."

"Well, quit worrying. We won't let 'em."

"You see, Grange," he continued some minutes later, "not one of 'em's around."

"One of who?" asked Granger ungrammatically; for his thoughts had been far from the

troublesome under class during the latter part of their walk.

"Why the Frosh, bonehead!"

"Roy, that banquet is certainly getting on your nerves. You're a regular old woman! It's time for French I, and the little dears are safely in their classrooms, where we ought to be this minute. See that clock?"

The two started, three steps at a time, up to the mathematics room, on the third floor; but when they reached the second, Roy slanted his course enough to enable him to glance into a room near the stairs. There sat the long-suffering professor of French, and before him were—empty benches!

"You see, Grange," he cried, excitedly, "now what did I tell you?"

"Jumping Jove, boy! I guess you're right after all."

"Giving your class a vacation, Professor?" he asked, of the tall young instructor who had come to the door at the sound of their voices, and who stood glancing anxiously up and down the hall.

"No, Monsieur Evert, my class has not yet appeared. C'est tres strange. Never have they all been late before. It cannot be that they are all ill."

"No, but probably they will be to-morrow,"

Granger called back to him, as they ran up the stairs to arouse their classmates.

The poor professor was more puzzled than before, and went back to his desk shaking his head over the odd ways of the American college student. This was his first year in an American institution, and its ways were yet strange to him; very strange.

"Frosh banquet! Frosh banquet! Come on, fellows!" yelled Roy and Grange, bursting into the big mathematics room. A sound like the breakers at the seaside, and the whole class rose as one man and made for the door; while the professor resignedly closed his book and bowed to the inevitable. Like the tramp, tramp of an army was the sound of feet on the stairs. At the foot, ranks were broken, and utter confusion reigned.

"Where have they gone?"

"What time did they start?"

"Where's Jim? He ought to know something."

"How'll we follow 'em?"

"Which way'll we go first?"

"Now, fellows," Granger's voice rang out above the confused babel, "listen to me. No use rushing off at random; we'd only lose time and accomplish nothing. Jim, you go to the frat houses and see what you can find out.

Tom, Carl, Chet and Milton take two or three more fellows and go to the boarding houses. You six fellows go to the railroad stations, bribe the ticket agents or anyone else to let you know what they know. Ben, select five men and do the same at the trolley stations. Hugh, visit the hotels and restaurants in town; for they might have disregarded custom for once, and stayed here. The rest of you fellows follow any plans which may occur to you; and all of you meet at the Theta Zeta House in an hour; or, if you can't get there, telephone. Come along, Roy, we'll go over to the house now and do some telephoning."

And Granger dragged him out of Bayard Hall, and at breakneck speed across the campus toward the fraternity house.

From the comfortable living room of the Theta Zeta House, they telephoned to various hotels in the near-by towns; but with no success.

"What's going on?" asked a fat, jolly-faced Senior, strolling lazily into the room.

"Oh, hullo, George! Frosh banquet."

"Where?"

"Don't know; trying to find out?"

"Sitting here?"

"No. I have most of the fellows out on different trails, and they're to meet here in half an hour."

"While you and Roy take it easy? Well, you chose a comfortable place to help."

"It is certainly my place to be here when the fellows come in, and we've been telephoning to all the country places while we waited."

"Any luck?"

"Not a bit."

"Reminds me of the time we ate the oysters the Sophs had ordered," and George sprawled out in the Morris chair, and lighted his pipe.

"Give us the story. It will relieve the monotony."

"You know little Tim Ross? Well, during our first year he had to room with his brother, Mat. Poor Tim was pretty hard up at first, and it was cheaper for him to share room expenses with Mat. Kind of tough on a Freshman to have to room with a Soph, but they got along pretty well, all things considered. It seems that whenever Mat got excited or worried about anything, he talked in his sleep; and one night he jabbered away at such a rate that it woke Tim up. He paid little attention to what Mat was saying until he caught the words, 'Frosh—oysters—nine o'clock,' and then he leaned over Mat and began to listen with both ears. After muttering for a while, Mat said, as if repeating something he was trying to impress upon his mind: 'Tuesday night—nine o'clock—password boots.' Tim needed nothing more ex-

cept the place, and he wondered if he could question Mat without awaking him. He's a plucky fellow, so he took a chance; and when Mat again repeated the words I just told you, he said to Mat in a whisper, 'Where?' 'Almond's Inn,' answered Mat, just as pat as could be. Tim spent little time sleeping that night, but lay awake planning how to do the Sophs out of their oysters. We had a small class that year, and some way the kid managed to see every member some time during the day, tell him the story, and secure a promise of being at Almond's at six o'clock that night. He telephoned the Manager that we had decided to have our oysters at six instead of nine, as first ordered, and to be ready promptly. A few at a time, and by various routes, we straggled out there; and, admitted by means of the password, we safely entered the dining room, ate the supper, and departed long before the Sophs began to gather. Maybe we didn't have a fierce rush the next day!"

At this moment a crowd of Sophs ran into the frat house and all began to talk at once.

Finally, out of the babel, Granger found out that the only information gathered was that the ticket agent at the trolley station said a crowd of boys went out on the seven thirty train for Beston.

"When is the next train? Nine twenty? We've got to make it. Rush, fellows."

The entire Sophomore Class tore out of the house, boarded passing trolleys, arrived at the P. & N. Station just before the train left, and swung aboard at the last minute. They spent the hour's ride in making plans for the discomfiture of the Freshmen when they should lay hands upon them. Arrived in Beston, they swarmed over the town, looking in vain for their enemies; but no trace or news of them could they discover until an old farmer told them that about nine o'clock a crowd of boys had cut across his fields to the river, and boarded one of the passing boats.

Perching themselves on a convenient stone wall, the Sophs paused to consider. Plan after plan was suggested, discussed, and rejected. It was no use; the Frosh had gotten too long a start of them, and the only feasible thing for the Sophs to do seemed to be to get something to eat in Beston, and then return to Roxford. While eating at the little Inn, and while on the way home, elaborate plans were made for vengeance in the rush which always followed an exploit of either class.

The next morning, just before chapel time, excitement reigned supreme in the hall of Bayard. In the center, the Sophomores, shouting,

gesticulating wildly, singing, and every few minutes giving forth the class yell; on the outskirts hovered a delegation of upper classmen, waiting to see the fun and to give directions when the Freshmen should be released from their classrooms. In the hall above, and on the stairs, a professor or two could be seen, lingering to see the first attack.

Up the steps of Bayard and through the doorway, into this crowd of howling, excited men, came a slight, black-haired little co-ed, on her way to the girls' sitting room in the west wing. Being a Freshman, and unused to preparations for a rush, she tried to thread her way between the men, and had gotten just in the middle of them when, with a yell of challenge, the first year men poured out of their classrooms and the Sophs surged toward them.

"Outside, fellows; outside!" ordered an upperclassman. "No fighting in here!" and the mad mob ran for the doors. The little co-ed, caught between the two forces, could neither advance nor retreat, and was thrown violently into Phil Spenser's arms. Much as he detested co-eds, he could not do less than support her, and do his best to pilot her safely out of the crowd. With great difficulty, he succeeded in getting her out of the worst of it, and led her toward the door opening into the girls' apartments. The noise had been too great before,

to admit of speech, but now the fellows were on the campus, where Phil was wild to be; and murmuring a few words of apology, and the hope that she was uninjured, he prepared to leave her.

The girl was little, but the size of her temper made up for her lack of stature; and she snapped, "No, I'm not hurt; but it isn't the fault of those great brutes out there, who *call* themselves gentlemen. But thank you for your kindness." The last was said rather grudgingly, and she vanished into the west wing.

Phil, feeling rather as if he had been slapped, hurried to the campus, saying to himself, "What else could you expect of a co-ed anyway?"

A blood-red flag, had, sometime during the early hours of the morning, been placed on a high branch of an oak in the center of the green facing Bayard Hall. As Phil reached the campus, Richard Dunn of the Senior Class was just giving directions as to the procedure in the rush. The Freshmen-Sophomore contests were always managed by the upper classmen, and strict obedience to their rules was enforced.

"That flag, men," he was saying, "belongs to the Sophomore Class. They're to defend it, and you Freshmen are to get it down from that tree if you can. Ready? Go!"

Most of the men had previously removed

coats, collars, and valuables to places of security, and now the two classes flew at each other like dogs from whom the leash has been slipped. In a circle around the tree, with their backs to it, stood the Sophs. Like a catapult, the entire class of 19—hurled itself upon them; and many fell before the fierce impact. Others were forced back against the tree itself, which helped bear not only their weight but also that of several more layers of humanity. There was no material gain for either side; so the Freshmen fell back to prepare for a second onslaught. Like a surging wave they advanced, but when within close range of the defenders of the tree, the air was filled with a blinding white substance, and with eyes, noses, and mouths filled with flour, with which the Sophs had checked their attack, they were forced to retreat again. The third time the first year men bore down on their enemies, it was not the well-ordered body of soldiers making a charge, but the rushing forward of single men, each of whom picked a man from among his opponents, and the warfare became a question of hand-to-hand fighting.

Phil had just flung to the ground a small but persistent Soph, when he saw his pal Butch Sullivan struggling with a fellow twice his size, who dealt him a blow which felled him. Phil rushed to him, but he lay motionless and in-

sensible. He tried to drag him out of the way of tramping feet, and a Senior came to his assistance. Carrying him to one side, they laid him on a pile of coats, while the upper classmen felt him carefully all over, to ascertain what damage had been done.

"Nothing serious," was the verdict. "I think he's only stunned. Run to the janitor and ask him for some whisky. He always has a bottle down in his room."

Halfway across the campus to Bayard Hall, in the basement of which were the janitor's apartments, Phil met the man himself.

"Jones, let me have some whisky quick. Man knocked out."

"You'll have to go to the girls' rooms to get it. One of the co-eds came down for it yesterday, and hasn't returned it yet."

"You go, Jones, will you?" pleaded Phil. He felt sure that he had rather descend into Hades than approach the girls' room for whisky; and yet he had to have the stimulant—he couldn't fail Butch.

"Sorry, but I can't. On an errand for Prexy, and have to hurry," and the man was off.

Unlucky Phil continued on his way to Bayard Hall, on the steps of which stood a group of co-eds, watching the rush from afar.

"Won't ask them; there's too many of 'em. I'll wait until I get inside," said the boy to

himself. He turned into the west wing, and knocked softly at the girls' door. No reply. So he boldly opened the door and entered, only to find the room empty. Annoyed beyond measure at the errand and the delay, he retraced his steps through the hall and out onto the campus again.

"This is a pretty fix," he murmured angrily. "What am I going to do now?" Spying a group of girls near by, he headed in their direction. He wished himself anywhere but where he was, but anxiety for his chum, and the fact that he had been sent by a Senior, forced him on. Painfully conscious of his torn and dirty clothing, he approached the group.

"Will one of you please get me some whisky?" he asked, without any preliminary remarks.

Some stared blankly at him. Some giggled. Others looked amazed, and highly indignant.

"I m—mean," stammered poor Phil, feeling more ridiculous every minute, "the janitor said you had some."

"Does he think we run a speak-easy?" inquired one haughty, red-haired girl.

"He—he said you had his," explained the miserable Freshman. Oh, why did *he*, of all the members of his class, have to be sent on this errand!

"I'm sure we were never guilty of appro-

priating anything of his, least of all his whisky bottle," declared a big-blue-eyed damsel.

"Little boys mustn't borrow hip flasks," reproved Nancy Pembroke; and the whole crowd laughed.

"Such an insult," snapped the little, black-haired girl of Phil's earlier encounter.

"Oh, I know what he means," exclaimed a pleasant voice, and Phil recognized Elsie Manning. "When Sue fainted yesterday, I ran down and got the whisky from the janitor and forgot to return it. If you'll come with me, I'll find it for you."

The two recrossed the campus, Phil painfully conscious of the laughter and remarks of the group they had just left, and fearful of being seen by the fellows; Elsie calm, friendly, inquiring if someone had been badly hurt.

Phil managed to force an explanation through his set teeth, and to thank her, at least politely, when she put the long-sought bottle into his hands; but raging inwardly at this most humiliating experience, he hurried out to his chum. The rush was over, won by the Freshmen, and Butch was sitting up, entirely recovered, in the center of a group of his classmates and upper classmen.

"Co-ed to the rescue, eh, Phil?" jeered Bill Williams as he approached the group. Phil's reply was indistinct, but forceful.

"Manage to fall in with them quite often, if you do brag so of your indifference to their charms," remarked a Senior.

"Charms be d——," exploded Phil. "Of all the d—— experiences I ever had, this morning's was the worst. I never want to see or hear of a co-ed again. I'm done with 'em."

"Again, Phil? That's what you said only yesterday," said Butch, with a wink at the other fellows; "and if my eyes do not deceive me, you even had to pilot one somewhere before you could take your part in the rush."

Butch winked at the other fellows; but Phil threw a look of rage at him, and, turning abruptly, strode off in the opposite direction.

"It's a shame to razz the kid so, I suppose," remarked Bill; "but it's too good a chance to be missed. He's always giving some co-ed the ax, and then every little while he's forced into some kind of an encounter with one of them."

Phil, boiling with rage and humiliation, went to his room and sulked for the rest of the day. It was all bad enough, but that imp of a Nancy Pembroke, with her tormenting remarks and saucy laughter, was the worst of all. Certainly she was enough to disgust one utterly with a coeducational college. He wondered why they had ever let girls in, anyway. Up until a few years previous, he understood, only men were admitted. What a heaven college must have

been then! But Nancy Pembroke! And just when he was beginning to think that, after all, perhaps there was something to her.

The last misty wreaths of the daydreams which had floated in the back of his mind after the hour in the park vanished; and black clouds took their place.

CHAPTER XI

HALLOWE'EN HORRORS

ON THE twentieth of October, every girl of the Freshman Class received the following summons:

The Sophomore Class *requires* you to meet at the southeast gate of the campus on Friday, October 31, at 5:30 P.M. Wear old clothes and do *not* try to absent yourself.

The card had a wide black border, upon which capered white skeletons; and a skull and cross bones decorated each corner.

"I'm glad I was on the invitation committee; now my work's all over," rejoiced Jeanette that morning, as she and Nancy were discussing the party while they dressed. "And I'm glad, too, that I'm not a Freshman. Remember how frightened we were last year?"

Nancy remembered. "But you're going to the spread this noon, aren't you?" she asked.

"Oh, yes; Marion said all the girls should go to that. By the way, I am to contribute a cake, and I forgot to get one."

“You will have time to buy one at the *Duck* after breakfast, and leave it in the kitchen on your way to Latin II.”

There was a small kitchen in the girls' suite of rooms in Bayard Hall, but since most of the women students preferred eating where the food was all prepared for them rather than do the fussing themselves, the near-by tea rooms were more popular than the kitchen. It was used principally for class or private spreads, and the Sophomores had engaged it for that noon. From time to time during the morning the various girls placed their contributions of food on the long table in the middle of the room, and went off to class. At half-past eleven, Ethel King, who was cutting English, thought she would go and set the table, heat the water for tea, and have everything ready for the others when they came from class. Gayly humming a little tune she entered the kitchen, gasped, and collapsed on a chair. The food had disappeared!

What had become of it? Someone must have hidden it as a joke. She sprang up, dashed to the big cupboard in the corner, and threw open its doors. Only familiar rows of dishes stood on the shelves. There was no other place in the room where anything could be concealed. She hurried out to the locker room and searched from one end to the other; then the recreation

room, and lastly the study. Not a trace of the missing lunch! All of the rooms were empty, and as she sat down on the couch to rest a minute and think, a terrible suspicion shot through her mind. Where were the Freshmen? They had no class just before lunch, and there were usually several of them in the girls' rooms at this hour. *They* must have taken the spread! What little fools, right before an initiation party! The'd certainly pay up for this!

A gong rang. Doors opened all through the building, and there was a rush of tramping feet and a wave of voices. Ethel got back to the kitchen door just as her classmates reached it.

"How nice of you to get here early, Ethel," someone called. "Everything ready? We're starved."

Without a word she threw open the kitchen door and ushered them in.

"Why! What's become— Ethel!"

Briefly she told her story, and pandemonium broke loose. Everybody talked at once, and nobody listened to anyone else. At last Marian succeeded in making herself heard above the din.

"Girls, we won't accomplish a thing by standing here. Ethel thinks the Freshmen are having their banquet—" A shout of dismay

and surprise went up. "Hush! Don't bring the other classes in to see what is the matter with us!" she cried sharply. "The point is this. Shall we go somewhere and have something to eat, or try to follow up the Freshmen?"

"Follow the Freshmen!" The vote was nearly unanimous.

"Remember, they have had an hour's start; and we have no idea where to look for them. Go out for half an hour, however, if you want to, and then come back to report. I'll stay here; and if a couple of you will volunteer to help me, I'll have something for you to eat when you come back."

"I'll stay," offered Jeanette.

"And I," echoed Esther.

All the others departed tumultuously, and the three remaining began to plan a lunch to take the place of the stolen one.

"I thought," said Esther, "that the Freshmen always had their banquet later in the term than this. I know we did."

"They do," replied Marian. "There is no hard and fast rule about it; though. I never heard of any first year class having its banquet before the Hallowe'en party. They are really not properly introduced to college until after that. These youngsters certainly have

nerve to have a banquet so soon; and on top of that, to steal the spread of the Sophomores to make up the banquet!"

"It will go hard with them if Fanny Krieg catches them," laughed Esther. "She's quite capable of putting them across her knee, one after the other."

"Isn't she funny?" remarked Jeanette. "She's so big and capable, so stern, and so—, so—sort of corrective in manner. She'll make what they call an *excellent* disciplinarian."

"She has a fine mind, though," said Marian, "and she'd do anything in the world for a friend. Now these lists are complete, I think. Will you take this one to the little store on the street back of the campus, and have it filled, Jeanette? And Esther, will you go to the *Duck* and get some cakes?"

While they were gone, Marian put things in order in the kitchen and set the table. As soon as the other two girls came back they all made ham sandwiches, put potato salad into a big dish, and placed the cake and fruit in the center of the table. They had just finished when the rest of the class trooped in hot, tired, cross, and disappointed.

"No luck at all," replied Ethel to Marian's question. "The janitor said he saw some girls with bundles go out the back gate during the last period this morning, and get into the auto

bus at the next corner. That bus goes all the way to Niagara Falls; so there's no use trying to figure where the young thieves are."

"The idea!" sputtered Clara Arnold, "of our sitting here calmly and just letting them get away with their banquet in peace!"

"But," protested Helen Pond, "we can't run all over the State on a wild goose chase."

"Besides," added Betty Fuller, "they have undoubtedly eaten the food by this time, so they have had the banquet, technically speaking. You can't break one up unless you are there before they eat, Clara."

There was a general laugh, and the tension was broken. Everybody was hungry, and for some minutes no one spoke. Suddenly Nancy burst out laughing.

"What's the joke, Nance?" demanded Julia. "Tell us so we can laugh too."

"I was just thinking, what an awfully good joke the kids put over on us! Imagine having *their* banquet with *our* lunch!"

"Some people certainly have a distorted sense of humor," commented Clara acidly.

"Oh, Clara," said Ethel, "forget it. We feel just as humiliated as you do; but there's no sense in stewing about it forever. It's done now."

"We must," put in Marian quickly before Clara had time to reply, "make our plans for

Hallowe'en. That is what this meeting was called for. Suggestions are in order."

"Boil 'em in oil!"

"Tar and feather 'em."

"Be serious, girls," begged Marian. "We can't stay here all afternoon. In the first place, where are we going to hold the party?"

"My uncle has a house that I think we could get," began Helen.

"Go on, tell us about it," cried several voices.

"It is a huge old-fashioned brick house of three stories, and it has a tower——"

"Lovely!"

"It's located about five miles out in the country——"

"The tower?" asked someone. "Where's the rest of the house?"

Helen blushed, and hesitated.

"Go on, Helen," urged Marian. "Don't pay any attention to those wise-crackers."

"The house has been empty for some months, but I think the parts we would use could be cleaned and heated. If you think you would like to go there, I'll telephone my uncle to-night and see what could be done about putting the place in order."

"It's the very place for such an affair!" declared the girls enthusiastically. After a little further discussion they voted to accept Hel-

en's offer, and the rest of the arrangements were turned over entirely to the various committees.

"But, girls," cautioned Marian, "in making your plans please don't go too far for safety's sake. Have an unpleasant preliminary lunch, if you wish, but be sure not to have anything that is likely to make any girl really sick. And no dangerous stunts, or leaving people indefinitely in the cold parts of the house, or anything of that kind."

"Of course, we don't want a Sunday School picnic," began Clara.

"Certainly not," replied Marian firmly; "but neither are we going to do anything which might result in real harm to any of the girls. It would be a terrible thing, not only for the unfortunate in question, but for us and the whole college if we were to go too far. So please be very careful."

"Might as well not have any party at all," grumbled Julia to Nancy as they went out.

"Oh, I don't know," replied Nancy quickly. "There are lots of unpleasant though entirely harmless things we can do." Nancy rather admired Marian, and Julia's implied criticism jarred on her.

The next morning the Freshman girls returned full of glee at the success of their escapade. Hallowe'en was far enough away for

them to scoff at the frequent threats of their enemies the Sophomores to get even with them. The upper classes, in fact, the whole college, laughed over the cleverness and boldness of the youngsters.

"They are getting far more attention than is good for them," grumbled Ethel to Marian.

"I know it. They were cocky enough to start with, but now they are quite unbearable."

"Never mind! Hallowe'en is coming," was the threat hurled many times a day in the faces of the unruly class. "Remember, we outnumber you almost two to one." It so happened that the college authorities had raised their entrance requirements, and the entering class was unusually small.

"We should worry!" was their invariable reply. Almost all the members of the Freshman Class had come from the Roxford high school, and the girls were all much alike—boyish, athletic, sure of themselves and their opinions, and determined to stick together at all costs. Their Junior mentors felt called upon to give them a bit of advice before the party took place, for they were afraid that the affair might prove too exciting.

"Don't forget," said Florence Stevens, a Junior, in addressing the first year girls, whom she had summoned to a meeting a couple of days before Hallowe'en, "that you are a part

of an organization—Roxford College—not merely a belligerent faction whose principal idea is to get the better of the Sophomore Class. There are customs and traditions here which you must meet and respect just as the rest of us have. The enmity which exists between the girls of the first two classes is a traditional one. Individually, at least, the girls are all friendly toward one another. The coming party is a custom of long standing, and I hope you will act in a manner becoming to yourselves and your college. It is not a free-for-all fight. You are supposed to accept whatever is done to you, and accept it like good sports, in a spirit of fun. Don't start your college career by becoming unpopular because of your unwillingness to conform to custom."

The class was somewhat subdued as it filed quietly out, and although there was some resentment, as a whole the talk had a good effect.

As Florence Stevens had said, the Hallowe'en party was a traditional affair at Roxford as long as there had been a Sophomore class of women. Ordinarily it was just an initiation of Freshmen by the Sophomores. They were taken off to some suitable place and submitted to various stunts and disciplinary measures. But in view of the extra unruliness of the class of 19—, the Sophomores decided that this year the initiation must be unusual; more than or-

dinary humiliations must be heaped upon the Freshmen. They had publicly humiliated their superiors, the Sophomores, by committing the incredible crime of appropriating the second year girls' spread for their banquet; hence public humiliation must be a part of the initiation.

Promptly at half-past five on the appointed Friday the Sophomores met their victims at the southeast gate of the campus. It was an ideal night for an outing of any kind, clear and a bit cool. Ethel King and Ruth Graves immediately took Edna Pierce, the president of the Freshman Class, between them and started for an interurban trolley which was rapidly approaching the corner on which they had met. They hurried her aboard, and made her sit in front of them in the rear of the car. After passing a couple of streets, Ethel leaned forward and touched her on the shoulder.

"Go and sit with that stout woman halfway down the car, on the other side, and ask her if she has an extra hairpin which you could borrow."

Edna flushed angrily, but obeyed. The woman looked at her in astonishment when she asked the question, and then she snapped, "I have not; and I don't know what you'd want of one anyhow," with a disgusted glance at Edna's boyish bob. Edna got up, but, at a signal from Ethel, sat down again. The woman

eyed her suspiciously and clung tightly to her pocketbook.

Presently the conductor sat down at the front of the car and began to figure his change. Marian went to Edna and said, "Go to the conductor and ask him if you can't help him with his arithmetic." He was a quick-witted young man with a sense of humor, and had probably had some experience with college stunts; so when Edna spoke to him he took in the whole situation at once. "Sure," he replied moving over on the seat. "Glad to have some help." He chatted with her until the other girls decided she was having too good a time, and peremptorily summoned her back again.

A crowd of new passengers got on at a street near the suburbs; and as soon as they were under way again, Ruth said: "Edna, get up, stand in the aisle, and sing 'A Little Yellow Dog.'"

"I don't know it."

"Then sing, 'I faw down and go boom!'"

Edna hesitated and was apparently ready to refuse; but Ethel leaned over and whispered, so no one else could hear: "Better do as you're told, Edna; because you've *got* to, even if we have to spank you to make you."

Edna's face blazed; but there was no telling what these Sophomores would do. There were two of them, and she was not very big; so there

was nothing to do but obey. At the first sound of the song, everybody turned around.

"Louder!" ordered Ethel.

When Edna had finished, the crowd applauded enthusiastically, all but the stout woman who was firmly convinced by that time that Edna was either the boldest girl she had ever seen, or else was a lunatic. The poor Freshman president furnished entertainment of several kinds until Brook Road was reached; and there the girls got off and hurried to "The Tower," as Helen's uncle's place was called.

In the meantime, Molly Mann, another Freshman, was clinging to the sides of an old Ford with one rear tire gone, and bumping from side to side of the back seat. In the first seat were Sara Rosenthal and Emily Hill, the former driving the car over all the worst roads she could find. When they reached the country, they made Molly get out and walk along the road ahead of them, while she tooted the horn and pretended they were going to run into her. In fact, several times they shoved her along with the bumper, when she showed signs of moving too slowly.

Elizabeth Poole was presented by May Peters, Grace Ford, Clara Arnold, and Fanny Kreig with a folding gocart in which she was required to take Anna Boland to the party. Anna was small enough to make this possible.

Fanny picked Anna up, put her in the cart and tucked over her a gay pink blanket on which danced cunning white bunnies. Clara removed Anna's hat, and tied a bonnet on her head; and May thrust a big rattle into her hand. They started off, and Anna, entering into the spirit of the affair, began to cry lustily as they passed a group of people waiting for a car. Fanny promptly administered several sound slaps which effectively checked the cries. As they proceeded, a near-sighted old lady, who was one of the crowd on the corner, protested against treating a poor baby so cruelly just because she cried. "Probably there is a pin sticking into her," she added pityingly.

After a little while Anna went to sleep; and as soon as the Sophomores discovered that, they dragged her out of the gocart, folded it up, and boarded a street car. Her appearance created much amusement among the passengers, but before long they got off again and walked for a while. So partly by car, and partly by foot, they also reached "The Tower."

Harriet Evans and Louise Brown, two Freshmen who had been especially obstreperous, were fastened to an express cart with a gay, bell-trimmed harness. Bessie Miller as driver, armed with a toy whip, sat in the front of the cart; and back of her, with her feet hang-

ing out, rode Charlotte Giles. The Freshmen horses started off slowly, and at times showed signs of balking; but a flick of the whip made them start on again. They trotted downtown to the Central Station, and got onto a train which took them to a stop a mile from "The Tower." From the stop they were driven across some rough fields to the house.

Some of the Sophomores had gone out that afternoon to get things ready, and the rest of them piled into Ada Smith's car behind which was hitched a trailer into which were assisted the few Freshmen for whom special humiliations en route had not been considered necessary.

By seven o'clock everyone had reached "The Tower." The Freshmen were immediately conducted to a near-by graveyard and separated, being placed in different sections of the plot.

"Don't dare to leave it until you are summoned," their tormentors ordered as they went out and shut the gate.

It was a bit spooky, for by then it was pitch dark in the country, and there was no moon. Bats swooped down frequently, and there were so many queer noises all about. Half an hour later ghostly figures appeared out of the darkness, took each girl by the hand, and led her to "The Tower," which showed a few dim

lights. A ladder was placed at a second floor open window, and up this each Freshman had to climb and thus enter the house. Some of them objected and protested, but the ghosts were obdurate and pushed them up none too gently when they rebelled. As each girl stepped inside, she was blindfolded by black-clad figures and taken to another room where she was left alone for what seemed like hours. Occasionally groans and shrieks rang through the house; the snapping of whips; cries of *Help!*, terrific crashes, dull thuds like the falling of a body; and in intervals, absolute silence even more terrifying than the noises. Finally, silent ghosts came for them and they were led, still blindfolded, on a tour through the house, up and down stairs, across slippery surfaces, through heat and cold, over all kinds of obstacles. It seemed an endless journey. At last they came to a standstill.

“Ready for the Chamber of Horrors!” announced a sepulchral voice.

One by one they passed through a room where they were made to handle numerous wiggly, slimy, prickly objects, both cold and hot. Some of these were hung about their necks, or drawn across their faces. Fearless and bold as the Freshmen were, they shrieked and shuddered during this ordeal. Afterwards they were led upstairs to another room, and

their bandages removed. When their eyes became accustomed to the lights, they saw they were in a long hall, on either side of which the Sophomores were lined up, unequal distances apart, each armed with a stout paddle.

"You will now run the gantlet," directed Marian Stone. "Each Freshman, as her name is called, will start at this end of the hall and go to the other end. You are to make the trip while I count ten, but no faster. If you get there in less time than that, you make the trip over again. Also, keep your hands folded in front of you, and walk erect. If you don't follow instructions exactly, you'll be given another turn. Edna Pierce!"

Edna was an agile girl, and a clever one. She managed to make the trip in just the allotted time, but her movements were so quick and unexpected that she received only four telling strokes from the numerous ones directed at her. Some of the others were less fortunate; but all obeyed the rules, for they evidently feared being sent back again.

They were then blindfolded again, and taken downstairs, where their captors fed them worms, birds' nests, frogs, and other palatable dishes. After all had been fed, forcibly or otherwise, they were taken to the highest room in the tower, and locked in. Here they were left for half an hour, before being brought

downstairs again. The bandages were then removed.

In the big living room, where a crackling fire danced on the hearth, a T-shaped table was spread with all the Hallowe'en goodies which could delight a college girl: pumpkin pies, fried cakes, plain and sugared, fruit, all kinds of sandwiches, sweet cider, steaming hot coffee, etc.

"Initiation's over," announced Marian, "Eats are on."

Persecutor and persecuted sat down and did full justice to the supper. It was the first opportunity that the members of the two classes had had to get really acquainted, and each formed entirely different opinions of the other than they had held before. It was a real get-together, and everyone had a good time. Soon after they left the table, a couple of women sent by Helen's uncle came in to clear up; and in stamped Uncle William himself.

"Well, girls," he cried, "I guess you'll all be pretty well tired out by this time; so when you're ready to go home, there are a couple of busses out here to take you. Those, with the cars you girls drove out, will accommodate you all, I imagine."

Uncle William was a bachelor of almost unlimited means, and with a passion for his niece; so the chartering of a couple of busses meant

little to him. A chorus of thanks greeted his offer, and the girls hurried to put on their things and pile into the cars. It was a very weary crowd that was deposited on the corner of College Avenue at half-past twelve.

"It's a good thing to-morrow is Saturday," yawned Nancy, as they got into bed a little later. "Let's sleep as long as we want to, Janie."

"Suits me perfectly," agreed Jeanette. "But wasn't it a nice party? Those Freshmen are really likable youngsters, even if they did seem so very boisterous. I guess they were just appearing at their worst, so as to get the better of us. Don't you think so?"

But she received no answer, and Nancy's regular breathing told her that her roommate was already asleep.

CHAPTER XII

A RASH PROMISE

NANCY had been considerably annoyed with Phil since her fall at the Hop. She had an irrepressible desire for making fun of other people, and at times rendering them ridiculous; but when she was placed in such a position by someone else, it was quite a different matter. For the first time, she was really angry at Phil, and decided to let him feel her displeasure to the full.

Election day was close at hand, and the students usually ran riot on that day, for they had no classes; and the townspeople, accustomed to the mad doings of the college folks, as a rule were quite tolerant. She resolved to keep her eyes open, and see how she could even things up with Phil.

The day was cold and showery, with occasional periods of brilliant sunshine. Most of the students took the early part of the day to catch up on overdue notebooks, themes, and library work. However, a few gay, irresponsible spirits, arm in arm, hippity-hopped in pairs back and forth on Main Street, singing:

“Here we go gathering nuts in bags,
Nuts in bags, Nuts in bags,
Here we go gathering nuts in bags,
Nuts in bags!”

until finally, tiring of their nonsense, the officer on that beat ordered them off, and threatened to arrest them if they appeared again that day.

As soon as darkness fell, however, all of the college men sallied forth in small groups like troops of gnomes bent on mischief.

“Phil,” said Granger Everet, catching hold of him just as he was going into a drug store with Tom Smith.

“What do you want now?” growled Phil, who was in bad humor.

“Don’t get fresh! Do just as you are told,” and Granger dragged them off into a dark side street where his auto was parked.

Three other Sophs appeared from nowhere and pulled from the car a striped barber pole.

“Now you two Frosh,” explained Granger, “are to carry this up and down Main, Salem, and Carter Streets, and back through the park.”

Phil forgot for the moment that he was only a Freshman, and was speaking to a Sophomore. He forgot also that the Freshman initiation in the men’s college had not yet taken place, and

that Sophomores could do pretty much as they pleased with their unfortunate enemies. So he exploded, "I won't do it."

"What?" exclaimed the four Sophs, closing in on the two first year men.

"No! I won't be made a fool of again."

"Do you know what refusal to obey means?"

"No; and I don't care." Phil was getting desperate. Tom said nothing; he just awaited developments.

"Joe," said Granger, "you and Merrit take him over to the basement of Bayard Hall and apply the customary remedy until he's ready to be docile. We'll wait here. You probably won't be long."

After a futile attempt at a struggle, Phil was led away by his two husky guards. After a short painful session in the basement, they brought him back, ready to do anything required of him. So, Phil taking one end of the gay pole, and Tom the other, they started up Main Street. Their tormentors kept well in the rear, and were lost in the crowd. People turned to look and laugh, but that was all, until the boys met a young and overzealous policeman who promptly stopped them and inquired where they got the pole.

"It was given to us by a friend," explained Tom.

"That's a likely story, young fellow," ob-

served the officer. "Friends don't generally give their barber poles as gifts. Tell the truth. Where did you steal it from?"

"Steal it?" bristled Tom.

"Yes, steal it. Oh, I'm on to you smart college chaps. Think just because you go to college that you can do anything and get away with it. But believe me, you're wrong. Come now, tell me where you got this pole or I'll run you in; and I don't mean maybe."

"Officer," said Phil, looking wildly around for Granger and his companions, "my friend told you the truth. It was given to us to carry through the streets."

"I don't believe a word of that yarn. Just stay right where you are."

He blew a whistle. When another officer came and heard the story, the patrol was sent for. They bundled the two boys into it, with their pole, and carted them off to the station. A jeering, laughing crowd had collected in the meantime; and many people followed them to see the fun.

The boys told their story to the sergeant, but he looked extremely doubtful when they had finished.

"But where did your friend get the pole?" he inquired. "It seems to me a barber's pole is not the sort of thing everybody would be

likely to have. All I have ever seen have been in front of barber shops; and I think it's likely that's where this one belongs."

"I don't know where my friend got it," replied Phil, hopelessly. He realized that the story sounded queer.

"But can't you get in touch with him? I can hardly let you go until we find out where the pole was stolen from, and who stole it."

"I don't know where he is now," said poor Phil, who had visions of spending the night in a cell, and having his family informed of his arrest. A police record! And he, Phil Spenser!

At that moment Granger walked in, and going directly to the sergeant's desk he laid a paper on it.

"Well, what's this?" asked the sergeant.

"The receipted bill for the pole," replied Granger. "I bought it three days ago."

The two Freshmen stood for a moment after the sergeant's curt, "You're dismissed." Then it occurred to Phil that they might as well have a bit of fun of the episode.

"Sergeant," he said, "we were arrested unjustly, taken forcibly from where we wanted to be, and brought here——"

"Where we didn't want to be," interpolated Tom.

"So," continued Phil, frowning at Tom, "it's only fair for this officer to return us to the spot where he found us."

"You're right," agreed the sergeant, with an appreciative twinkle in his eyes. "Brown," turning to the young officer, "take these fellows back to where you picked them up, and deliver the pole along with them."

Ready to kill the boys, Brown escorted them out to the patrol wagon. This time they got gayly into it, with their pole, waving farewell to the window full of grinning policemen, and were quickly returned to Main Street. Granger and his companions had deserted them for other pranks, and they were left along with the pole on their hands.

"We'll get even with 'em, Tom," said Phil, after they had carried their burden away from the main thoroughfares.

"How?"

"Let's tie Soph colors on this, and plant it in Prexy's front yard."

"Good enough, but where will you get any Soph colors? All the stores are closed now."

"Well, come along; don't drop it like that. Can't you walk when you think?" For Tom had slowed up, and let his end of the pole drop to the walk.

Peeved at the reproof, Tom started up at a

brisk pace that gave Phil all he could do to keep up with him.

"Quit pulling back like that," grumbled Tom. "Do you think this pole is made of elastic?"

Phil growled something between his teeth, as they started on a short cut through the streets back to the campus.

"Drop it here a minute while I go and get a spade from the janitor's shed," said Tom, when they were directly back of the Eta Sigma House. Phil was only too glad to stop, and dropped down on the pole to recover his breath. It was very dark, and it seemed good to rest; he hoped it would take Tom a long time to find a spade.

Suddenly he found himself in a flood of light, and looking up to see where it came from, he saw, to his horror, Nancy Pembroke looking down at him from an upper window. Frantically he signaled her to extinguish the light, and after a maddening delay she did so. A moment later she appeared beside him.

"What in the name of fortune are you doing here?" she demanded.

He told her where they were going, and asked for some Soph colors.

Nancy felt that she should not be willing to see her own class get into difficulties; but then the men were none too pleasant to the co-eds,

as a crowd, and it would be fun to see what happened.

"I haven't any colors," she said; but she laughed.

"I bet you could get me some in there, if you would," said Phil, motioning toward the sorority house.

"Perhaps I could, but I don't care to be mixed up in this."

"You needn't. Just get 'em for me quick, before Tom comes back, and nobody'll ever know."

"What'll you give me for them?"

"Oh, anything you want, only hurry!" promised Phil rashly.

She returned to the house and in a very short time was back with the coveted colors in her hand.

"You said you'd give me whatever I wanted," she reminded him, "and it must be when I want it."

"Yes, yes," said Phil impatiently, hoping that she wouldn't make too big a demand, for his allowance was getting too low to buy very much candy or many flowers; and hoping too that she would go before Tom returned.

"Well, I'm not quite sure yet just what I *do* want; but when I'm ready, I'll let you know, and you must give it to me right away."

"Yes," agreed Phil, recollecting that he could always borrow if necessary.

"All right. Now remember, that's a promise. Good luck to you," and off she ran, just a couple of minutes before Tom came back with the spade.

Just why she demanded this promise of Phil, Nancy couldn't say; but something mischievous in her delighted in the prospect of being able to make a demand on him sometime, should she care to. She told the story to Julia Thompson the next day, and Julia promptly told her just what to ask for. The idea was distasteful to Nancy, but she was afraid Julia would jeer at her for being a coward, or a prude which Julia considered was worse. So she agreed to carry out the plan of the bolder girl.

Tom nearly tormented the life out of Phil to find out where he had obtained the colors, but he got no satisfaction whatever. After a great deal of hard work, and many pauses to look and listen, they succeeded in planting the pole with its gay streamers of red and gold in the middle of Prexy's lawn. Then they stole quietly off to bed, congratulating themselves on the fact that no one had seen them.

The next morning everyone who had early classes in Bayard Hall had considerable difficulty in reaching them. Some of the election

revelers had expended a great deal of energy; for a huge ash wagon, belonging to the Department of Public Works, was placed at the top of the steps, directly across the doorway. Whoever would enter was forced to either climb over it, or crawl under it. Rumors of the fun had spread through the fraternity houses, dormitories, and boarding houses, and a big crowd gathered to watch the unfortunates try to reach their eight fifteen classes on time.

Most of the girls chose to crawl under the obstruction, but the instructors and fellows went "over the top," especially after an extra tall professor had gotten stuck under the wagon and had to be forcibly dragged out by a rescue party amid great applause.

Nancy, however, like the daring creature she was, elected to go over. She climbed nimbly into the vehicle, but instead of going right on, lingered, leaning over the driver's seat; for, Julia had told her, now was her chance to get back at Phil for *everything*. The unsuspecting Freshman was in a desperate hurry to get to French class, for the instructor was apt to lock the door at eight twenty. He did not notice Nancy, and hurriedly clambered over the wheel.

"I was waiting for you," she observed sweetly.

"The deuce you were," growled Phil. "I'm in a hurry."

"Really I was," she went on, placing herself in such a position that it was well-nigh impossible for Phil to pass her, "for I know now what I want. You remember you said you'd give me whatever I wanted, when I wanted it?"

"Yes; well, out with it; as I said I'm in an awful hurry." Phil was becoming very impatient.

"Give me a kiss, and tell no one why you did it?"

"Now? Here?" demanded Phil, aghast.

"Sure. You promised, you know."

Phil hesitated.

"You're evidently not a man of your word," she said. "I suspected as much. Besides, I *could* tell about last night's affair if I chose."

Phil grabbed her roughly, kissed her hurriedly, shook her violently, and jumped off the wagon and rushed into the building so fast that he hardly heard the roars of laughter and applause that went up from the crowd gathered on the campus.

Nancy, crimson to her hair, climbed out of the wagon and also disappeared into Bayard Hall.

She was avenged for the Hop. It would be many a long day before the campus life would

forget that kiss; and Phil would be razzed to death over it. Nancy laughed to herself over the spectacle of the college co-ed hater kissing one of them in public; but it was rather a forced laugh, for she felt embarrassed, and, though she wouldn't acknowledge it even to herself, a bit cheap.

Later in the day the officers of the Sophomore Class were summoned to Dr. Deering's office to account for the placing of the barber pole on his lawn. He was furious over the spoiling of his grass, and disgusted with a prank that took liberties with him and his property; and he spoke in no uncertain terms about the contempt with which he regarded high school tricks played by college men.

No information was gained through his curt questions, and all he could do was to order the class to restore his lawn to its former order. Knowing that the Freshmen must have been mixed up some way in the prank, the Sophomores promptly assigned the task to them, and stood over them while they did it—hard masters who did not hesitate to find all kinds of fault with their work, and force them, under pain of physical punishment, to do it with the most meticulous care.

CHAPTER XIII

A REBUKE

MOST of the people who witnessed the episode on the steps of Bayard Hall the morning after election were greatly amused by it; but there was one spectator to whom it brought no amusement. Jeanette was quite shocked over Nancy's escapade, and very much grieved; but she said nothing about it to her friend. It was becoming increasingly difficult to tell Nancy things; she was rather touchy these days. She had to admit that the permissible Sophomore nonsense was not always a sufficient excuse for Nancy's conduct. She feared her beloved chum was getting a little too lively, and wondered whom she could consult, or whether she ought to take anyone into her confidence.

It was with relief and delight that, a few days later, the coming of Helen Morris for the week end was announced at the sorority house. Helen might be able to do what she could not. She retired to a most secluded alcove in the library and wrote a long letter to Helen. She told her all about Julia, about the change in

Nancy and her own fears and worries over her chum. She felt rather like a sneak and tattletale as she mailed the communication, but, after all, Helen was their older sister in Eta Sigma; and if they had stayed at Eastport she would have been their upper class confidante. Sometimes Jeanette even wished they had gone back to the smaller college where there were only girls; but then she remembered that she had agreed to come here to please Nancy.

Helen arrived on Friday night, and Jeanette generously offered to go to an empty bed in the dormitory if Nancy and Helen would like to room together. Nancy had gone to meet her former crush, and had returned from the station apparently as much infatuated with the older girl as she had been the preceding year.

"Why, Janie," cried Nancy, with all her old affection, "I'd hate to put you out. Couldn't we have a cot in here?"

"It would be far too crowded," replied Jeanette.

"Why not take the rose guest room, Helen," proposed Suzanne Eliot, a senior, "and if Nan wants to sleep there with you to-morrow night, all well and good. Then nobody will be inconvenienced. Then too, you would rest better to-night if you slept alone; for I know you're tired."

"I am tired," confessed Helen. "How about

it, Nannie, will this arrangement please you?"

"Yes—s, but you know, of course, how we'd love to have you here with us."

As they left the room to escort her to the guest room, Helen managed to give Jeanette's arm a little squeeze, thus letting her know that the letter had been received and would be given attention.

Saturday afternoon, the sorority girls had a theater party in Helen's honor, and a supper afterwards at the *Duck*. The play was a thrilling mystery tale, and the girls were discussing the first act when Ethel leaned forward to Marian Stone, who was in the front row of their section, and said in a low tone. "Have you noticed that fellow who is right in front of you?"

"No," replied Marian, scanning the person in question, "Why?"

He was a tall, thin boy of about twenty-five, dressed in somewhat shabby clothes, but neat and inconspicuous except for a peculiar habit of glancing from left to right and back again, then peering over the back of the seats into the row in front of him.

"Don't you notice how oddly he acts? Do you suppose he is going to have a fit of some kind?"

"I hardly think so. He's probably nervous at the idea of so many women all around him."

“How come, when he isn’t an Ed?” replied Ethel, scornfully.

“Hush,” was Marian’s only comment, as the curtain went up on the second act.

In the interest of the play they forgot all about him, until, at the most exciting part of the act, when everyone just held her breath to see what was coming next, the young man suddenly stood up, turned, and faced the audience.

“Is there a doctor in the house?” he asked in ringing tones.

“Yes,” replied a man from the back row, rather pompously, “I am a doctor.”

“Oh, how are you, Doc?” responded the young man, saluting him pleasantly.

The house rocked with laughter, and the head usher hurried the disturber out of the theater.

When the people in the row where he had sat prepared to go home after the performance was over, several discovered that they were minus their pocketbooks. The excitement was great; and the box office and head usher were besieged for information regarding the thief.

“I put him out on the street,” was all the usher could say, “and he went off in the crowd. I couldn’t be expected to know that he had stolen anything. I thought I smelled drink on him, and that seemed sufficient explanation of his queer actions.”

The girls discussed the affair excitedly as they stood about the lobby with the rest of the crowd. One young girl who had been among the victims stood off in a corner, quite aloof from and in great contrast to the angry, excited losers of property.

"See, she's crying," whispered Jeanette to Esther. "The loss of her bag must mean a lot to her. I wonder if we couldn't help her."

She called the attention of the other members of her party, and after a few minutes' discussion, Helen went up to the girl.

"Excuse me," she said, in her pleasant, friendly manner which won everybody, "my friends and I couldn't help seeing that you are in distress. I wonder if we couldn't be of some assistance to you. The loss of a pocketbook often puts one in a most difficult position, especially if it happens in a strange town."

"That's just it," replied the girl, apparently trying to check her tears. "I'm from out of town, and my ticket, all my money, and some bits of jewelry were in my bag." She was a pretty little thing, with big pathetic brown eyes; but her clothes were rather shabby and out of style.

"If you don't mind being a bit informal, come to supper with us. We are going over to the *Porcelain Duck*, a couple of blocks from here. Then we can talk, and plan what you

had better do. We're from Roxford College," she added, as the girl hesitated, "and are glad to be of assistance."

"You are very kind," the girl replied slowly. "I accept your invitation."

At the *Duck* they had a couple of large tables in the private room behind the restaurant proper. The girl told them while they ate that her name was Georgia Crane, and that she lived in Syracuse. She had come to Roxford early that morning on a business matter, which she finished about noon. Not wanting to go home immediately, she had decided to go to the theater. She was so refined, so appealing in manner, that the girls took quite a fancy to her; and all were anxious to help if possible.

When they had finished supper, Helen laid her hand kindly on Georgia's arm, saying, "I hope you won't be offended; but for a few minutes my friends and I should like you to consider yourself one of us, and let us do for you what we would do so readily and so quickly for one another. We'll take up a little collection, so it won't mean a great tax on any one of us, for your fare back to Syracuse."

"Oh, I couldn't—" began the girl blushing hotly.

Helen paid no attention, but rapidly collected whatever each of the girls slid into her hand. They were generous, for they were really anx-

ious to aid Georgia; and the proceeds were more than enough to buy the ticket to Syracuse.

"I don't know how to thank you," Georgia said as Helen slipped the money into an extra purse of her own, which chanced to be in the pocket of her coat, and pressed it into the girl's rather reluctant hand.

"Please don't try. We all are just girls together, and glad to help one another."

"Let's go to the station with her," suggested someone.

"I think I'll take a later train," interposed Georgia quickly; "for I—I want to stop a couple of places first."

She seemed oddly and desperately embarrassed. Helen thought possibly she wanted to buy a trifle or two with the extra money, and felt timid about it if the girls were with her; so she decided the matter quietly but firmly. "We'll go on back to the college then. We've enjoyed meeting you, and hope it won't be the last time. Suppose you let us have your address, and then some of us might look you up some time."

"Oh, I'll—I'll write to you when I get home," promised Georgia, evidently very eager to get away as soon as possible.

Helen and Suzanne Eliot gave her their cards, and the new friends parted. Some of the Eta Sigma girls stopped in the stores on

their way back to college, and as Ethel and Marian came out of Bond's department store, Ethel grasped her companion's arm. "Look, Marian! There's Georgia!"

"Where?" demanded Marian, looking in the wrong direction.

"There. Oh, she's gone now; and you can't see her. But she was with a man, Marian!"

"Well, suppose she was. What's the matter, Ethel? Don't stop short like that; people will walk all over us."

"But, Marian, I'm quite, quite sure she was with the fellow who stole the pocketbooks in the theater!"

"Nonsense! Your imagination is running away with you. You have had too much excitement."

"I'm almost positive it was he! What do you suppose they were doing together?"

"I think you're mistaken, Ethel. You probably would not be able to recognize the man again if he stood right in front of you."

"I'm sure I should; for I couldn't keep my eyes off of him in the theater. He acted so queer."

"Well, anyhow, we can't do anything about it; and let's keep the incident to ourselves. No use exciting the wonder and suspicions of the rest of the girls."

"All right," agreed Ethel, rather reluc-

tantly; for she dearly loved excitement, and to be the cause of arousing it, that was better still.

That night Nancy took her things to the guest room and spent the night with Helen. After they got to bed Helen gradually and determinedly led the conversation to Nancy's pursuits and interests at Roxford. During the day she had managed to meet Julia Thompson and had talked with several Seniors concerning Nancy. She got impressions and opinions here and there without anyone suspecting her of spying upon the younger girl.

After talking in generalities for a time, Helen asked suddenly:

"Nanny, what's the trouble between you and Jeanette?"

"Between me and Jeanette? Why, why what do you mean?" faltered Nancy. "We're good friends."

"That's just it, you are good friends, not pals as you used to be. What came between you?"

"Nothing. I'm just as fond of Janie as I ever was. There is no one like Janie."

"Maybe you are just as fond of her as you ever were; and I agree with you that there is probably no one like Janie; but you are not inseparable, as you were at Eastport, and Nancy, I'm sorry."

“Well, you see,” said Nancy, rather uncomfortably, “Janie doesn’t like Julia Thompson, and hates to see me with her; and——”

“And since you have persisted in running about with Julia, Janie, like the unselfish little chum she is, let you shove her aside and replace her.”

“No—o,” began Nancy. It sounded rather bald and ugly as Helen put the matter.

“Now, Nanny, from the very first time we met last year, I have had a real older sister’s affection for you, and desire for your welfare. I’m going to speak quite plainly, and I ask you to try to take it in the spirit in which it is said, and not get angry. Remember, it’s only because I care so very much. I came up here this week purposely to see how you were getting along, and how you had reacted to a co-educational institution; and, to be perfectly candid, I’m disappointed.”

“Why?” asked Nancy, a bit shocked and considerably chagrined.

“First, because you have become infatuated with a girl who is not good for you. Julia is loud, dissatisfied, and a bit cheap. She thinks only of having fun, and has no real affection for anyone; no, not even for you,” as Nancy began to protest. “I’m sorry to have to be so brutally frank, but I took a walk with Julia this morning, while you were finishing your

notebook work in the library, and I was able to form a correct opinion of her, because I've seen her type before. She is eager to be popular, because it would give her more opportunities to get what she wants; and you were her first victim. You were attractive, roomed in the house of the best sorority in college, and seemed likely to be popular with your class; and she expected you to drag her to popularity. Instead of that, Nanny, she is dragging you into all kinds of undesirable things."

"W—what do you mean?" whispered Nancy. She was feeling a bit frightened.

"She has caused you to slight and hurt Jeanette, decreased your interest in study and your desire for knowledge, lessened your popularity with your classmates, for they always say, you know, that 'Birds of a feather flock together'; made the older girls look disapprovingly upon you; and has been the source of your lack of dignity with the men students. Fun is an important part of college life, Nan, but don't be a hoyden, especially in a college where the girls should be on their guard to prevent adverse criticism. Remember, dear, coeducation is still so new a venture at Roxford that the women must conquer the opposition to it by their conduct in college life. Be friends with the men, by all means; but don't be bold and constantly in evidence."

Nancy felt bruised sorely. She was crying softly. "If it's—as bad as that—I might as well quit—and go—home——"

"Not at all," said Helen decidedly. "That would be the act of a coward. Simply turn yourself around and start over. You have done nothing that can't be remedied; you have simply gotten started on the wrong road; but the year is not far under way. There is plenty of time to rectify your mistake. Now, I'll tell you just what I want you to do. Drop Julia, and don't bother to feel sentimental over it; for she'll quickly find someone else. Resume your old relationship with Jeanette. Forget about the men for a while, except when you meet them socially. Give more time and attention to your work. Don't bother about your standing with the girls; for they will be quick to see that you are finding your real self and will admire you for it.

"Forgive me for being so blunt, Nanny," she went on, drawing the younger girl into her arms; "but I can't bear to have you make a poor start. I nearly spoiled my college course the first year by getting in with a girl somewhat like Julia. There was no one interested enough at first to point out my mistake, and it was not until the middle of the Sophomore year that my eyes were rudely opened by my overhearing a conversation between two of the in-

structors who were discussing me in no uncertain terms. Pulling myself out of the difficulties into which I had blundered was no easy task, but it was finally accomplished. Will you promise me to do what I have suggested? I have thought it over very carefully, dear, and I am sure that it is about what your beloved Uncle John would advise if he were here; only of course he could do it so much better."

Nancy managed to sob out a tearful, "Yes."

"Then we'll drop the matter and go to sleep."

Helen was worn out with her efforts to convince without antagonizing the other girl, and fell asleep very soon; but Nancy lay thinking over what had been said to her. She was embarrassed, somewhat astonished, and greatly humiliated over the plain portrayal of her failings; but she could not honestly deny its justice, and she felt no anger—just a sense of overpowering hurt and helplessness. Her pride urged her to leave college to-morrow and never come back; but her good sense and courage demanded that she remain and make good. Oh, if Uncle were only at home so she could go to him occasionally, things would be much easier. Perhaps he might come back soon; for Mr. Doyle was much worse, and in his last letter Uncle had said he feared his patient could not live very long.

With a little prayer for help in the reconstruction process, Nancy finally fell asleep.

The next day Helen managed to have a talk alone with Jeanette, and thanked her for her letter concerning Nancy.

"I suspected," she said, "from little things that passed from this chapter of the society to ours, that Nan had rather lost her head for a time; so I planned this trip with her interests in mind. Of course, Nan is much fonder of you than she is of me, naturally; but sometimes an older girl can say what a pal cannot. I think I've made an impression, and she has promised me to give up Julia and make a fresh start. It isn't necessary for me to say that I know you will help her all you can. Nan hasn't changed a particle inside; she was just carried away for a while by flattery and a change of surroundings. And of course Julia's influence on her was anything but desirable. I am inclined to think she was beginning to realize that herself. In any event, I'm sure she will quickly adjust herself to rectify her mistakes."

CHAPTER XIV

DIFFICULTIES

DROPPING Julia was not so easy as Helen had made it appear. The girl simply would not be turned down. In many of the classrooms, seats were never assigned; the students sat wherever they pleased, provided that the men stayed on one side of the room, and the women on the other. Nancy and Julia had sat side by side in many of their classes, much to the detriment of their work; for Julia wrote little notes constantly when she was not whispering. She made plans for almost the entire day, schemes which kept Nancy close to her. Julia had even begun stopping at the sorority house for her on the way to their eight fifteen class in Bayard Hall. Nancy honestly tried to get rid of her admirer. She refused to make appointments with her, when she could possibly do so without being actually rude; she took to studying in her own room, instead of the library, whenever this could be done; she went late to classes in the hope of being able to sit with someone else. All to no avail. As soon as she entered the room, Julia would call or

motion her to the seat she had saved for her. She could not refuse it publicly, without creating a sensation; so she generally dropped hopelessly into it.

One afternoon Jeanette, going up to their room at an unusual hour, found Nancy crying.

"What's the matter, dear?" she asked, kneeling beside her and pulling Nancy's head onto her shoulder, while both arms went around her.

"I—just—can't get rid—of—Julia," Nancy sobbed. "Oh, I know it serves me right. You warned me and I wouldn't listen to you. I'm just like a fly in a spider web now. When I'm with her she still fascinates me, and I do whatever she wants me to. I didn't see through her until—until Helen made me. I promised I'd give her up, and I'm trying; but she won't let me go!"

"Well, don't cry, Nannie," soothed Jeanette, patting her back as if she were a very small child. "We'll find some way to rescue you. She doesn't like me very well; so perhaps if I stay with you all the time for a while, she will get tired of being around, feeling that 'three's a crowd,' that is, if you would want me to."

Jeanette's rather faltering afterthought brought a fresh burst of tears from Nancy.

"Oh, Janie dear, of course I want you—

always! But I don't deserve to have you be so lovely to me. I see now how often I must have hurt you, but truly I didn't mean to. I was just so taken up with Julia that I walked over everybody else, even, I guess, over some of my own ideals. She made such an awful fuss over me, and I do love to have people make a lot of me; so of course I fell for it. I know I was a perfect idiot. I'm not trying to find excuses for myself, but she seems to have some kind of a hold over me, and——"

"Let's just forget all about it," interrupted Jeanette.

"But I'm most awfully sorry, Janie, about the way I've acted toward you. You'll forgive me?"

"There is nothing to forgive; but if it will make you feel better, I say 'yes, fully and freely.'"

A loving embrace wiped out the past, just as there was a quick knock at the door, followed by the entrance of Ethel King.

"Why, what's wrong?" she asked. "You two look rather washed out."

Jeanette hardly knew what to say, and looked at Nancy who said slowly:

"My eyes have been opened to the fact that I've been suffering from too much Julia. I promised to drop her, but she just won't be dropped."

"I thought something was up when you came to Rhetoric so late this morning."

"Why?"

"If you could have seen the expression on your face when Julia figuratively dragged you to the seat she saved for you, you wouldn't ask such a question."

"But don't look so sober, Princess," she went on, "Jeanette and I will rescue you from the dragon. We'll form a faithful bodyguard, to attend you on your trips abroad."

"But I can't bother you like that——"

"We three are all in about the same classes; so it's simply a matter of sticking together until the dragon sickens and dies."

"But she'll get angry, and perhaps be horrid to you——" began Nancy.

"That won't disturb me one little bit," said Ethel. "Will it you, Jeanette?"

"Not in the least," Jeanette replied so forcefully that Ethel laughed.

The girls were so faithful to their self-imposed duty that for a week Julia did not get close enough to Nancy to have any private conversation whatever with her. Even the notes which she wrote in class and tried to slip across to Nancy never got past her guards. Jeanette apparently never saw the bits of paper extended to her, and Ethel simply shook her head at the persistent Julia. Finally the girl

appeared to give up her attempts; but Nancy felt that she was simply biding her time, and waiting for a chance to be unpleasant.

A couple of weeks later, her opportunity came. Ethel had relaxed her vigilance, thinking the worst was over. Jeanette was writing letters.

"I'm going over to the library, Janie," said Nancy, "to look up some of those theme subjects. There will be just about time enough before dinner."

"Wait a couple of minutes, and I'll go too."

"I'll be going on, if you don't mind; for if I sit down to wait for you, the chances are I won't go at all. I'll be in Alcove E."

The campus was rather deserted. It was Gym hour for the Sophomore men. The football team was out on the distant athletic field, playing a practice game with the scrubs. All the men who were not otherwise engaged were on the side lines. The women were never much in evidence the hour before dinner. Their classes were over for the day, and many of them were amusing themselves off the campus. Nancy found her references, and sat down to go over them. Someone entered the alcove and stood over her; and, glancing up quickly, she saw Julia.

"May I inquire why you have thrown me into the discard?" she asked, unpleasantly.

"Why—why—" stammered Nancy; and stopped short.

"Yes?" urged Julia, sharply.

"Well, you see I was neglecting my work, and I felt that I'd have to give up running about and get down to study."

"Your sudden devotion to work doesn't seem to interfere with the friendships which you really *want* to continue."

Poor Nancy did not know what to say.

"No!" went on Julia. "It's just since that important Miss Morris was here that you dropped me like a hot cake. I suppose she told you I wasn't good enough for you. Let me tell you I'm not in the habit of having people pick me up and make all kinds of a fuss over me and then throw me aside——"

"You are mistaken there," corrected Jeanette, who came in just in time to hear Julia's last words. "*You* picked Nancy up; not she you."

"What right have you to interfere?" Julia demanded hotly. "I was discussing a private matter with Nancy."

"I had an appointment with Nancy here at this hour, and as I came in I could not help hearing what you said. My right to interfere, as you term it, comes from the claim of a life-long friendship. Nancy's work has suffered since her intimacy with you. She is obliged to

drop either study or you. Since she cannot remain in college without studying, and since she cares a great deal for college, you may draw your own conclusions. It was her hope, as well as mine, that you would understand the situation without having it put to you so bluntly; but since you either couldn't or wouldn't, it was necessary to speak plainly."

"So you're through with me," sneered Julia to Nancy, not condescending to answer or look at Jeanette. "Well, I thank you for the brief opportunity to bask in the light of your favor. Evidently you change friends as you do colleges; and possibly there is more than one reason for each."

"Julia," begged Nancy, "don't be so angry. I——"

"Don't try to explain; it's quite all right. 'Farewell, thou art too dear for my possessing.' Browning knew his onions."

"I'm afraid she has become a dangerous enemy; I feel afraid of her," observed Nancy, as Julia strolled carelessly off.

"Nonsense!" said Jeanette, "don't get such an idea into your head. What could she do to you?"

"I don't really know, but you never can tell. And Janie, she's not like most girls, that is, like the other girls we know."

"Well, just forget it."

After dinner, a few evenings later, most of the Eta Sigma girls were gathered in the living room before an open fire.

"By the way," said Suzanne Eliot, "you remember I gave Georgia Crane my card the day we left her in front of the *Duck*?"

"Yes; did you ever hear from her?" inquired Esther Moore. "I liked her a lot."

"I did too," added Jeanette. "And I felt sorry for her; she seemed so—so sort of sad."

"I had a note from her to-day," continued Suzanne, "in which she enclosed the full amount of the donation we girls gave her——"

"Why?" cried everybody.

"Listen! She writes:

DEAR MISS ELIOT:

I shall never forget the whole-hearted kindness of you and your friends in aiding a perfect stranger. I thoroughly enjoyed the supper, and being with such a pleasant crowd of young people. The good will I shall always keep in my heart; the sum of money I am returning. I considered it a loan, and hope you will understand my feeling in the matter and not be offended or think me ungrateful or rude.

Yours sincerely,

GEORGIA CRANE.

"Independent; isn't she? But somehow I like her doing it," commented Susanne.

"What is her address?" asked Jeanette.

"She didn't give any."

"That's queer," observed Ethel.

"Well, she probably feared we might send the money back again, and therefore gave no opportunity to do so."

"She would hardly fear that; but it does seem odd that she should give no address," said Ethel.

"Well, I wish we knew more about her," mused Jeanette. "I feel as if there were a story connected with her."

Ethel looked up quickly at Marian, who was peached on the back of the davenport; but she shook her head decidedly.

"When I go home for Thanksgiving," began Jeanette; but everybody laughed.

"Now, what's the matter?" she asked, surprised at the interruption.

"Nobody goes home for Thanksgiving," said Suzanne, "except the girls who live in Roxford."

"Nobody goes home for Thanksgiving!" echoed Nancy in surprised tones.

"No; I forgot that you two were newcomers, and unacquainted with all our customs. You see, mid-term exams begin the Monday after Thanksgiving, and the powers-that-be discovered a few years ago that the students were utterly unfit for work a week after they returned from the Thanksgiving vacation; so they

called a joint meeting of the Students' Association for Men and the Students' Association for Women, and put the situation before us. Mid-term marks are important, not only to the individual student but also to the standing of the college as a whole. Several plans were suggested, but finally the two Associations voted to remain in Roxford for Thanksgiving, and have an extra two days tacked onto the Christmas vacation. Don't look so woe-begone, Jeanette; we have lots of fun here. You know we don't spend the time in study."

"Then if you don't study, why not go home?"

"Because at home there is a continued round of pleasure, too much feasting, too little sleep, and half the people are anywhere from a day to three or four days late in coming back."

"Well, what do you do here?" asked Nancy, resignedly.

"Of course, strictly speaking, the vacation beings after the last class on Wednesday afternoon; but nothing is ever planned for that evening. Everybody does whatever she wishes. Thursday we sleep just as late as we want to; and, believe me, it's a real treat! Dinner is at one o'clock here and in the various frat houses and boarding houses. Everybody dresses up and makes it a formal affair, and we have favors at each place. In the afternoon almost everyone takes a walk, but comes back early to

get ready for the dance. That is a joint affair, held in the Gym. And you don't go in couples; everybody goes. The fellows go dressed as Puritan men, and the girls as Puritan women. The dresses and suits are all exactly alike, and everybody masks; and it's lots of fun trying to guess with whom you are dancing. Some awfully funny situations arise sometimes; for maybe you are having the best kind of a time with a person you can't bear the sight of unmasked. One has to be mighty careful not to say anything about anybody else, too."

"Sounds like fun!" said Nancy.

"It is. Then Friday everybody sleeps until noon; and in the afternoon and evening all the frats, sororities, and boarding houses keep open house. There is a simple buffet lunch in each house, and everybody goes about visiting."

"Saturday," she went on, "the girls generally go on a hike to Drake-Eaton Park; and if it isn't too cold, take food along and cook it over a camp fire, and spend the afternoon exploring. Sunday, everybody rests and is ready for work early Monday morning. At first some of the girls objected to staying here instead of going home; but now even the Roxford girls don't go home if they can help it."

"Didn't the parents object?" asked Jeanette.

"At first, it seemed a bit queer to them; but now they just look forward to Christmas, and

appreciate their children all the more when they do see them."

Nancy and Jeanette enjoyed immensely the few days of fun. Everything was so new to them, and people took particular pains to make them have a good time. The girls, as Helen Morris had predicted, were quick to notice the change in Nancy and approved of her efforts to remodel her conduct. It was with wrath in her heart, therefore, that Ethel sought Suzanne one day a week after the Thanksgiving dance.

"May I come in, Sue?" she asked, peeking into the room where the older girl sat writing a theme. "I know you're busy, and I won't stay long; but I want some advice."

"Sure—come in; but close the door and lock it, or somebody else may take it into her head to join us. Now what's the trouble?"

"You know how Nancy has been trying to reform, and how hard she has worked?"

Suzanne was a bit weary. "Yes, she said; now don't tell me she's around with that Julia person again, or that she kissed Prexy in assembly, or anything like that."

"Be serious, Sue!" said Ethel. "And you know how mad Julia was at being dropped? She hinted then to Nancy that there must have been a reason for her leaving Eastport College. Now what do you suppose she has done?"

"Can't imagine; but don't keep me in suspense."

"She intimated to everybody she danced with at the Thanksgiving dance that Nancy had to leave Eastport because she was dishonest!"

Suzanne was serious enough now. "No!" she gasped in a shocked voice.

"That's the honest truth. Several of the fellows told me about it; and there's more. Some way she got hold of the story of the thief at the theater, and openly 'suspects' that he is related to Nancy and has followed her here so she can help him work his game. You knew small sums of money have been missing of late around college."

"Well, she can hardly do much damage if she thinks up anything quite so absurdly silly as that. I never heard such nonsense."

"Nor I; but you know how fast an impossible story can spread, and how many people will believe it. What can we do?"

"I can hardly imagine anyone believing such a yarn as that; and I don't know what we can do. Let me think a minute."

After some reflection Suzanne added, frowning, "I really don't know of anything we can do at present."

"But Sue, we *must* do something. We can't let this go on."

"The only thing I can see is to deny any tales

that happen to come to our hearing, and let it go at that. You can't make a public denial when there has been no public accusation."

"But it seems terrible to have such a thing spread about. That girl's apparently unscrupulous."

"It surely is terrible; but Nan's friends won't believe it, and will do their best to stamp out the rumor. It's too ridiculous! I think it is unwise to drag such an affair into the open unless it becomes absolutely necessary."

"I suppose you are right; but——"

"I shall tell the girls in the house here, and let them keep their ears open. For the present, I think we'll have to let it go at that; and hope and pray that no word about it reaches Nance."

CHAPTER XV

CHRISTMAS SURPRISES

I'M AWFULLY disappointed because Dad and Mother couldn't get home for Christmas after all," lamented Nancy to Jeanette as they were packing the night before the Christmas vacation began.

"You're certainly complimentary," laughed Jeanette, "to bemoan the fact that you have to go home with me."

"Don't forget, young lady, that I refused several invitations in order to accept yours," and she gave her chum an affectionate if none too gentle hug.

The dreaded mid-term examinations were over, and the girls felt that they had earned their freedom from work for a couple of weeks. Both had done well in all their tests. Julia, it was rumored, had a couple of conditions, and would be obliged to spend the holidays in study. Whether she intended to remain at Roxford or go elsewhere, no one knew. She had formed no new attachments among the college girls, but

spent much of her free time with people outside of college.

When the two girls got off the train at home, Nancy's progress was blocked by a man who persistently got in her way. A bit annoyed, she looked up.

"Dad!" she shrieked, and flung herself upon him.

Greatly to the interest and amusement of the people in the station, they embraced each other enthusiastically.

"When did you come?" she asked. "Where's Mother? Janie, did you know about this all the time? Did you finish all your business in the West? Must you ever go back again? Oh, tell me, *everything!*"

"Nan, you can ask questions as fast as ever," laughed her father, taking her bag. "Nobody alive could keep up with you. You are to come home with us, Jeanette," he added. "Your folks are coming to our house, and we're all going to have dinner together to-night."

The taxi could not move fast enough to suit Nancy, and she was out of it almost before it actually stopped. She dashed up the steps of her home, flung open the door, and literally fell upon her mother who was just crossing the hall to meet them."

"Oh, Mumsey," she cried, "it's so good to have you back again!"

They held each other close for a moment, and then Mrs. Pembroke put Nancy aside to go and welcome Jeanette.

"You girls go up and get ready for dinner," she directed after the greetings were over. "Mr. and Mrs. Grant will be here very soon, and dinner is almost ready."

"How very natural this seems," observed Jeanette, as they entered Nancy's pretty rose and blue room.

"Doesn't it? And how nice! Oh, look, roses!" A tall silver vase holding a few choice pink buds stood on the walnut secretary. "And new shades on my lamps! And new hangings!"

"How lovely everything looks," agreed Jeanette.

"I'm glad we put a silk dress apiece in our bags, since we have to attend a dinner party to-night," rejoiced Nancy, shaking a gay print to get some of the wrinkles out of it. "There, I guess the rest will have to fall out after I put the dress on. You were wise to pack your flowered georgette; for that never musses no matter what is done to it."

Mr. and Mrs. Grant arrived before the girls finished dressing. Nancy helped Jeanette into her gown, and sent her downstairs ahead, lingering a bit over her own toilet to give her friend a few minutes alone with her parents.

The evening fairly flew. Everybody had so

much to talk about—college affairs, home town gossip, tales of the West.

“Well,” said Mr. Grant, rising at last, “it’s nearly midnight. I suppose we’ll see one another again fairly soon, and we could save a few of our stories for future meetings.”

There were many social affairs during the holidays, all of which Nancy and Jeanette enjoyed; but they soon found that they had far less in common with the young people whom they had left behind, than when they entered college.

“After you have seen everybody and found out how they are and what they have been doing since you saw them last, then you’re through,” observed Nancy a day or two after Christmas. “I mean, of course, people outside of the family.” She and Jeanette were on their way downtown to take advantage of the after-Christmas sales, and spend some of their gifts of money.

“I know,” said Jeanette, “I feel that way too. Does it seem as if you ever went about with them and were really intimate with some?”

“No, it doesn’t. I’m afraid several of the girls think we’ve become high hat since we went to college; but it’s not that. It isn’t that I feel any better than they—not for a minute—there

are some lovely girls in our old crowd; but——”

“We’ve just grown apart, that’s all,” concluded Jeanette.

“I guess that’s it,” agreed Nancy. “The different interests and occupations bring about the change. They can’t feel wildly enthusiastic about what we do in college, and we don’t fit in with their home affairs. It’s queer, and sort of sad, I think, the way you grow away from people.”

The stores were very much crowded. Many people were exchanging gifts; others like the girls were taking advantage of the sales; and many were just wandering about looking at things.

“Now,” said Nancy, after they had obtained several bargains, “I want one more thing—a scarf; then we’ll go home. I’m getting awfully tired, and I’m ravenously hungry.”

As they stood at the counter, waiting for change, Jeanette’s eyes was caught by the sight of a familiar face.

“Nan,” she cried, jogging her friend’s arm, “there’s Georgia!”

Without waiting for a reply, she crossed the aisle and went up to the girl who was standing at the lace counter.

“Georgia,” she said, forgetting that she

hardly knew her well enough to use her first name.

The girl wheeled about quickly. "Oh," she breathed, in apparent relief, "how you startled me! Where did you come from so suddenly?" Then she added, "It's nice to see you again."

"I just came from across the aisle. Nan's there, waiting for change. She'll be over in a minute. I was surprised to see you here. Where did you come from?"

"I? Oh, I—I came to town to-day on account of the sales; and I suppose you did the same."

"I came *up* town, not *to* town," corrected Jeanette. "I live here, you know. I just go to college at Roxford."

Nancy joined them at this point, and the three stood talking for a time; but Georgia seemed ill at ease. She glanced anxiously about her all the time.

"Now, you must come home to lunch with us," said Jeanette.

"Oh, no," said Georgia quickly, "I couldn't possibly."

"Of course, you can," declared Nancy, assuming the refusal was due to difference. "We just won't take no for an answer." And she took one arm, while Jeanette took the other.

"We'd better go to our house, Nan," observed Jeanette, as they boarded the street car. "Your mother has her club to-day."

"That's right. I'll phone her from your house. You see," she explained to Georgia, "we have been friends for so long and have been so very intimate that either house is home to both of us."

Mrs. Grant welcomed her guest very cordially, for she had heard all about her from Jeanette long before this. The girl's nervousness vanished when they reached the house; and she seemed so happy and contented that they prevailed upon her to remain all the afternoon. Nancy and Jeanette were obliged to leave her for an hour while they entertained a caller who had come from out of town especially to see them; for Georgia preferred to amuse herself with some magazines in the little library, rather than meet a perfect stranger.

After greeting the girls' out-of-town callers and chatting for a few minutes, Mrs. Grant entered the library and kept Georgia company. She was a very motherly woman, full of sympathy for and interest in all young people. In a short time she gained the confidence of the girl, and they had a long, intimate talk.

When the afternoon was over, and it was time for Georgia to go, the girls were very reluctant to have her disappear again for so long a time. "Give us your address," they begged, "so we can keep in touch with you."

"No," she said nervously, "I can't do that."

I don't want to give you the address of my boarding house. The landlady is a somewhat meddlesome creature who would not hesitate to open my mail if she saw fit. For the present you may, if you wish, send letters to the General Delivery in Utica. Then, if I make a change, I'll let you know."

The girls thought it queer that she should be willing to remain in the house of such an unscrupulous person, but of course forbore commenting on it.

"Now, my dear," said the kind-hearted Mrs. Grant, "I expect you to come again soon, no matter whether my girls are at home or not. I want you to feel that you have a friend here."

Georgia thanked her shyly, and hurried toward the station.

"There is tragedy of some kind in that girl's life," observed Mrs. Grant to her husband that evening, after she had told him as much as she knew of Georgia. "I wish I could find out what it is, and help her. We had a friendly little visit this afternoon, and she seemed to lose some of her shyness; but she really told me almost nothing about herself."

"Haven't you enough to do looking after your own daughter," jokingly asked Mr. Grant, "without troubling about other girls?"

"It is just because of Jeanette, that I feel so

interested. This girl ought to be as happy and normal at her age as our own girl. The contrast saddens one."

At the same time Mr. and Mrs. Pembroke were also discussing the affairs of other people.

"I had a letter from John to-day," Mrs. Pembroke was saying. "Mr. Doyle died two weeks ago."

"Then John will soon be home?"

"No; he intends to finish the course he has begun at the hospital; and in the meantime he is attending Mrs. Doyle. She has had a bad breakdown, due to all she has been through with her husband. John's course will be over about the first of March, and I fancy Mrs. Doyle and he will plan to come back on the same steamer."

"Good chance for John—a wealthy, attractive, comparatively young widow——"

"What nonsense, Ed! You know John has never thought of any woman since he lost Elsie."

"He'd forget about Elsie fast enough if the right woman came along."

"Well, I hope you won't put such an idea into anybody's else head, least of all Nancy's. She would have a fit over her beloved uncle caring for anyone else. I think you are absurd to think of such a thing!"

"Maybe I am," said Mr. Pembroke, picking up his newspaper, "but we'll wait and see. Time will tell."

The last day of vacation had come, and Nancy and Jeanette were on the train which was rapidly carrying them back to Roxford.

"What do you suppose?" cried Jeanette, as soon as they were settled in their chairs. "You'd never guess who walked in right after breakfast this morning."

"Who?"

"Georgia!"

"Never! How in the world did she happen to be in town at such a time of day, and what did she want?"

"She told Mother that she had decided to leave Utica——"

"I thought she lived in Syracuse," interrupted Nancy: "I'm sure she said that the day we went to the *Duck* with her."

"She did say Syracuse then; but you know at our house she said she was living in Utica."

"That's so; well, go on."

"She has given up her position, and wants to find something to do here."

"What sort of work does she do?"

"I really don't know. Georgia is so kind of mysterious in spots. So Mother, acting true to form, asked her to stay at our house for a while,

and promised to help her find something to do. Isn't that exciting, and interesting?"

"It surely is. I wish we were going to be at home longer to see how things go. She is mysterious. I wish we knew more about her."

"So do I; but Mother will write us all the news."

"And just think!" cried Nancy, her mind turning to her own immediate interests, "when we come home for Easter, Uncle John will be home!"

"Perhaps," corrected Jeanette.

"Perhaps? What do you mean?"

"Nothing at all, dear, except that you always make such positive statements."

"Why, what is likely to prevent his coming?"

"Oh, I don't know; a thousand things, or nothing at all. If you'd only put a 'maybe' into your expectations you wouldn't so often be disappointed, and disappear in the depths of despair."

Nancy laughed; and then the girls settled down to enjoy the magazines and candy which thoughtful parents had provided for the trip.

CHAPTER XVI

A COMIC VALENTINE

AFTER Christmas, the college work was much more difficult; and until Valentine's Day the students of Roxford were kept so busy that they thought little of social affairs. On the fourteenth of February, however, the big mid-winter carnival took place. One section of the campus was very low, and in winter time that was flooded to form a skating rink. The ice was usually in its prime on the festival of the saint of lovers; in fact, it was said around college that never had St. Valentine failed to provide ice for the merrymaking. Big bonfires were built near the rink, refreshments were served in the near-by Gym; and faculty, college students, and invited guests from outside frolicked together all the evening.

Nancy and Jeanette had invited Helen Morris and Martha Scott from Eastport; and somebody had given Curtis Owen an invitation. They all arrived on the afternoon train, and the girls had their hands full trying to entertain them; or rather Jeanette did, for Curtis

promptly claimed Nancy for the rest of the afternoon.

"Now, Curtis," Helen called after them from the porch of the Eta Sigma House, as they strolled off, "don't walk Nan all over town. Remember, you both will have to skate to-night, and if you do too much walking you'll be dead tired."

Curtis replied with a careless wave of the hand, and he and Nancy kept on their way. Helen considerably went off with some of the Roxford Senior Eta Sigmas, leaving Martha and Jeanette alone. It was the first time they had met since they said good-by in Eastport the preceding June; and they could not talk fast enough. Dinner time was upon them before they knew it, and the sorority house was a veritable bedlam. Everybody was hunting up skates and costumes, so as to lose no time after dinner. Nearly every girl had something to borrow or to lend, and there was constant running up and down stairs and in and out of one room after another.

At eight o'clock the campus presented a very attractive picture. A full moon hung in the sky; the flames of the bonfires leaped high in the air, and on the brightly lighted rink gayly dressed figures glided merrily to and fro. The snow-covered campus was dotted with people

who came to look on; and here and there couples strolled about under the trees.

"Martha!" exclaimed Jeanette so suddenly that Martha jumped, "is that Maude Pond?"

"Heavens!" exclaimed Martha, "I thought you'd seen a ghost. Where?"

"Over there, skating with that tall chap in a red sweater and cap."

"Yes, I believe it is."

"How on earth did she get here?"

"By invitation, I suppose," laughed Martha, "like the rest of us outsiders."

"I wish she were anywhere but here." Jeanette looked very much worried.

"Why? What's the difference where she is? You needn't have anything to do with her."

"No, but she was so horrid to Nan when we were at Eastport that I hate to have her anywhere near us. She makes me nervous."

Jeanette's curiosity was aroused; and when Martha left her, she tried to keep Maude in sight. At last she saw her leave the ice and go toward the Gym with Julia Thompson. The puzzle was solved, at least partly; evidently she was Julia's guest. No one else would be apt to have invited her; but how had they become acquainted?

"Nan," she called, as her chum passed her with Curtis. The two turned and glided back to her. "Did you know that Maude Pond is

here?" She felt that Nancy should be prepared for a chance meeting with the girl.

"No!" said Nan. "Who asked her?"

"I'm not sure, of course; but I think Julia did."

"Good *night!*" said Nancy with unwonted force, looking as if the heavens were about to descend upon her.

"What's the row, if I may be allowed to ask? Just who is Maude Pond that her advent should excite you two so much?"

Nancy hurriedly explained her connection with both Maude and Julia.

"Fine combination they'll make," she observed briefly.

"Well," said Nancy, "I'm not going to worry about her. I'm having a good time, and I'm not going to let anybody spoil it. Come on with us, Janie."

Jeanette skated with them for a while; for there was no formal pairing off at this frolic, and people constantly changed from one partner to another. She did not see Julia and Maude come out of the Gym, but after a while she saw Maude skating with Phil Spenser. Maude was beautifully dressed in the most chic of skating costumes, and evidently had made quite an impression on the men; for she seemed never to lack male partners. Evidently her preference for male society displeased her

hostess; for Jeanette came across the two arguing beside one of the bonfires.

"Why should I?" Maude was saying sharply. "I came for a good time, and I'm having it. Why don't you go and skate with your dear friend Nancy?"

Julia laughed a disagreeable, significant laugh, and added something in a tone so low that Jeanette could not hear what she said. Evidently each knew all about the other's connections with Nan. Where had they met, and when? How much harm would they be able to do? The unpleasant rumors had died down after the Christmas holidays, without any of them reaching Nancy; and the girls were feeling relieved at the idea that Julia had changed her tactics. At that moment Nancy and Curtis came up to the fire.

"Good evening, Miss Pembroke," called Maude. "You haven't forgotten me, I hope."

"Oh, no, Miss Pond. How do you do? I did not recognize you at first."

Nancy could not, without being very rude, avoid introducing Curtis to the girls; and Maude immediately dominated the conversation.

"I was so surprised when you did not return to Eastport this year," she said to Nancy. "Yet it wasn't so surprising, after all, I suppose, considering what happened."

"What do you mean?" asked Nancy, quickly. She had not been intimate enough with Maude Pond for her to know about Uncle John's going away; and there was something disagreeable in her way of speaking.

"Oh, I wouldn't mention any unpleasant events of the past. I hear that you are making a success of—well your business at Roxford."

"Her business is study," put in Jeanette, "and she is making a success of it."

"Yes, yes, of course, primarily; but there are other interests for which study may be a cloak."

"What are you trying to get at?" demanded Nancy hotly, her temper rising.

"I'd never squeal on an old friend. Good night! Perhaps I'll meet you in some other college next year." Maude took Julia by the arm and walked away.

"What does she mean?" asked Nancy, looking pathetically disturbed and worried.

"Nothing, I fancy," replied Curtis. "She is evidently trying, and quite successfully, to be disagreeable."

"Yes, you know how she was last year at the house party," Jeanette reminded her.

"That's so." Nancy brightened somewhat.

"Let's all go in and get something to eat," proposed Curtis.

"Did you have a good time, Nan?" asked Jeanette anxiously some hours later, when they

were going to bed. Martha was already sound asleep on a cot in their room. Nobody minded being a bit crowded at the carnival time; every available bit of space was in use.

“Yes, I really did, in spite of Maude. Wasn’t she like one of the unpleasant comic Valentines?”

Jeanette laughed; but she was greatly worried over Maude’s remarks, and her intimacy with Julia. The next day, before the Eastport guests departed, she made an opportunity for a talk with Helen, and told her the whole story. Helen’s advice was the same as Suzanne’s had been.

“You can’t do anything now,” she said, “except be ready for developments. I’ll try to keep an eye on Maude after we go back and let you know if anything turns up.”

CHAPTER XVII

A SHOCK—AND A SUCCESS

HERE'S a letter from your uncle," said Jeanette, throwing a square envelope into Nancy's lap. "It must have come in on the late mail. I found it down on the hall table when I came in."

Jeanette sat down to do some mending, and for a few minutes her attention was given entirely to the work. At last, realizing that Nancy had been silent for a long time, she glanced at her. Nancy sat very pale and still, the open letter in her lap.

"Nan, dear," said Jeanette, getting up and letting her mending fall to the floor, "what's the matter?" She crossed the room and put her arms around her chum.

"Uncle—" said Nancy slowly, in a dull, monotonous voice, "is married."

"Married!" gasped Jeanette.

Nancy nodded and began to shake all over.

"Wait!" Jeanette snatched up their *busy* sign from the desk, opened the door, hung the sign on the outer knob, then closed and locked

the door to insure their privacy. "Now, tell me all you care to, dear."

"It's Mrs. Doyle," whispered Nancy.

"Well, she is very nice. You remember how much we liked her when we met her in New York." Jeanette tried to soothe her.

"Yes; but—but he's always been so devoted to Elsie's memory, and it was so very beautiful and romantic—and now it's all spoiled." Nancy sobbed like an inconsolable child.

"But Nan, dear, he has always been lonely, you know; and now if he has found someone who can make up to him a bit for the loss of Elsie, I think it's just fine."

"Maybe you do, Janie. He isn't your uncle. You seem not to realize that I've lost him forever."

"Of course, you haven't!" demanded Jeanette stoutly. "He will never care any the less for you——"

"Yes, that is what he says; but a wife can't help coming between us."

"Will he be home soon?" asked Jeanette, thinking it wiser not to argue.

"About Easter, he says; but he isn't going back to Eastport."

"He isn't?"

"No; he has an excellent offer from a big hospital in New Orleans and intends to accept. So he'll go directly there."

“But he’ll be sure to want you to visit him; and think what a lovely place it will be to go!” Jeanette was trying hard to present the bright side of the matter; but to poor Nan there seemed to be no bright side.

It was many days before she even partly recovered from the shock; and she had many periods of resentment and grief over the affair.

At Easter the girls again went home, but only for a week. Georgia had become quite one of the family at the Grants’, and appeared to be very contented. It seemed a bit odd to Jeanette at first to have her there all the time, but she soon became accustomed to it. Georgia had obtained a position in a large office at a salary which provided for her personal wants. For her room and board, she assisted Mrs. Grant in the house mornings and evenings, as well as on Saturday afternoons; but Mrs. Grant insisted upon the girl having a certain amount of time to herself for rest and recreation.

Nancy and Jeanette had little time during this vacation for anything but buying materials and having clothes made; for after they went back, spring and summer garments would be needed.

One of the big events of the spring, for the women students, was the Sophomore banquet. For weeks it was carefully planned, every precaution being taken for secrecy; for if the

Freshmen got even a hint of when it was to be, or where, they would try to break it up. During this period the Sophomore president was guarded most vigilantly, because she was Toastmistress, and it was a decided advantage to the first year girls to be able to capture her and keep her from the banquet. That was almost as good as breaking up the banquet itself.

On the twentieth of April great excitement was caused in the early classes of the morning because Marian Stone was missing. Wholesale inquiries failed to bring to light any information as to her whereabouts. Had the Freshmen decided to make sure of getting her and taken her off during the night? This was the question which the Sophomores asked one another. The first year girls openly accused the Sophomores of having taken Marian somewhere to keep her in safety and secrecy until the day of the banquet.

"That's only a blind!" declared Ethel King. "You know right well where she is!" They only laughed provokingly at her.

Ruth Graves, the Sophomore vice president, was overwhelmed with suggestions as to what should be done about finding the missing president.

"You know, we've just got to have her by—" began Clara Arnold.

Ruth promptly put her hand over Clara's mouth.

"Be careful! Don't you know that the very walks have ears?"

Marian's roommate, Helen Pond, was besieged with questions about the missing girl.

"Didn't you know when she was taken?"

"Was it during the night?"

"I should think you would have heard, or do you sleep too sound?"

"Why didn't you lock your door?"

"Girls," cried Helen in desperation, "for Heavens' saks, let me alone! I don't know any more than you do about Marian, and I'm worried to death over her myself!"

Clara Arnold was in favor of cutting all classes and devoting the whole time to conducting a thorough search. "We're worse than dubs," she declared hotly, "to sit back and let those blamed Freshmen, who think they're so smart, walk calmly off with her and keep her!"

The girls as a whole were not in favor of her plan. "A public, wholesale search would accomplish little," said May Peters, at the class meeting which had been called to discuss ways and means; "for the Freshmen would be on guard constantly; and if we seemed to be getting near wherever she was hidden, they'd only move her farther away."

"That's true," agreed several of the girls.

"Why not go right on in the usual way?" asked Bessie Miller. "Pretend we know where she is, just as the Frosh accuse us of doing; and keep our eyes and ears wide open for any clews."

"I think that's a good plan," said Ruth Graves. "How do you all feel about it?"

The girls voted to adopt Bessie's suggestion, and several days passed. On the surface everything seemed quite as usual, but underneath things seethed, ready to break out over the first provocation.

The Sophomores decided to complete their plans for the banquet, and have it whether Marian was found or not. On the morning of April 25, at half-past four, here and there, one at a time, from all directions shadowy figures flitted quietly toward a big factory on the outskirts of Roxford. The girls had been wide awake most of the night from excitement and watching their chance to get out without being observed or heard.

"We can never get down from the third floor without the Freshmen next door to us in the dormitory hearing us," said Nancy to Jeanette, when they were making their plans.

"I'm afraid not; and we've got to be careful about the Juniors too; for they would probably aid their sister class."

"Let's pass the word to the rest of the girls, and have them lock their doors, whenever they have a chance, and steal down to the basement some time during the evening. We can have a few mattresses and blankets down there, and stay for the night; and then we can get out when it's time without any danger."

So by various ruses and tricks the whole class managed to reach the Boro Factory in safety.

Fanny Kreig's father was manager of the Boro Company, and he had taken charge of the whole affair for the class. So when they entered a large room on the third floor, used by the employees of the company as a recreation room, they found the table set and everything ready.

"Now, if we only had Marian," said Ruth Graves.

"Girls, hush! I hear something coming down the alley," cried Ethel King. "I bet the Freshmen are onto us."

Several girls flew to the window, facing the alley, and saw an ambulance draw up at the side entrance, and back around. Speechless with surprise and suspense, they watched; then they saw Marian spring out and dash into the building!

At the door of the banquet hall they met and fell upon her *en masse*.

“Let’s eat first, girls,” she gasped, as soon as she was able to speak, “and make sure of having our banquet. Then I’ll tell you all about everything.”

The girls were so excited they hardly realized what they were eating, or whether they ate at all or not. And as soon as they finished, Marian began her story.

“You know, I have a friend who is a nurse at the City Hospital, and as I was sitting in the library last Saturday, trying to study—but really thinking about the banquet—an idea occurred to me. I left the library at about five o’clock, and instead of going to my room, went directly to the hospital. I caught Grace just going off duty, and told her my plan. She had me entered as an emergency case, put in a private room which was closed to all visitors. My meals were brought to me regularly. I had books to read and study, and Grace took charge of my ‘case.’ This morning she got the ambulance to bring me out here—the driver is quite an admirer of hers, so it was easy to persuade him to come—and here I am.”

The room rang with applause, and Marian was congratulated on her cleverness.

“Just one thing more,” she said. “I really didn’t intend to have you all worried; so I wrote a short note after I got to the hospital, saying

to go ahead, and I would be at the banquet; and I directed it to Helen Pond. But, somehow or other, it was never mailed. Grace put it in her bag to mail on Sunday, and she found it there this morning."

But the girls were quite willing to forget the worry they had suffered, since they had the banquet in peace.

"Now the Freshmen will think up some way to get even with us," observed Ethel, as they filed downstairs about seven o'clock.

It was a tired and sleepy lot of girls who attended classes that day, but they were not too exhausted to exult over the Freshmen whenever they met them. Not a breath of the Sophomore doings had reached their ears, and they had slept peacefully until the regular hour for rising. Then only did they discover that the Sophomores were missing. They had raced madly about town to hotels, lunch rooms, and boarding houses, and all the other possible banquetting places, but all to no avail.

"It wasn't fair to go to a factory," Edna Pierce accused them.

"Why not? There are no rules about places, so long as we stay within a radius of ten miles from the campus."

"Well; but—no class has ever banqueted in a factory."

“Neither has any Freshman Class, before yours, held its banquet before Hallowe’en, my lady. Other people can be original too!”

The Freshmen had no more to say; but secretly they vowed vengeance.

CHAPTER XVIII

A CHALLENGE

EDNA PIERCE called a meeting of the Freshman Class shortly after the Soph banquet. The cleverness and success of the second year girls still rankled in the minds of the lower class, and the president thought it well to make a few plans for revenge while her companions were still at white heat.

She explained the purpose of the meeting, and then called for suggestions. No one seemed to have any that were practical or attractive.

"Can't anybody think of anything that's original?" asked Edna in despair. "Think hard, everybody!"

Finally Harriet Evans got up.

"Madam President!"

"Yes, Miss Evans."

"We might challenge the Sophs to a baseball game."

"Baseball!"

"I'm quite sure nobody in the other class has ever played, while most of us played at

least a little bit. We should have a walk-away."

"Where could we have it?"

"In the Gym. Make it an indoor baseball game, for we couldn't very well play on the men's diamond."

"Why not?" demanded one belligerent little Frenchman, who always denied that the men students should have any rights that were denied to the women.

"Do you want to stay on in college, or leave before the game is over? Prexy would be up on his hind legs in a minute if he saw a crowd of co-eds on the athletic fields belonging to the eds."

"All nonsense!" persisted the defender of women's rights.

"Perhaps it is; but we want to remain in college, if you don't."

"It will be rather a flop if by chance the Sophs do know how to play, after all," said Edna doubtfully; "for of course we're not exactly Babe Ruths, ourselves."

"I'm sure they don't," persisted Harriet. "We knew most of them in high school, and never heard of their playing any games at all. 'Graham Cracker' said that their class hated gym, and didn't care for even basketball; and if you don't care for basketball, you might as well be off the earth, athletically speaking."

The Gym teacher for the women was Carolyn Graham; and the girls had nicknamed her "Graham Cracker."

"But Nancy Pembroke and Jeanette Grant are new this year, and there are a couple of others. They may play," suggested Sue Laird doubtfully.

"I doubt it. Jeanette, for instance, is too quiet and poky; and Nancy hasn't evinced much interest in games of any kind."

"Well," said Edna, a bit desperate, "if you all wish to adopt this plan all right. Those in favor, please rise."

The class rose in a body.

"Well, that's settled," she said, a bit relieved and yet somewhat dubious. "I appoint Louise Brown and Molly Mann to write and send the challenge."

Motion for adjournment was duly made, and the first year girls dispersed.

Molly and Louise went directly to the library where they wrote the challenge, and mailed it to Marian Stone.

She called a class meeting as soon as she received the epistle, and read it aloud:

"The members of the Freshman Class challenge the members of the Sophomore Class to a game of indoor baseball on Friday afternoon, May 15, at four o'clock in the Gym."

One big groan burst from the Sophomores.

"We can't refuse the challenge, and we don't know a thing about baseball!"

"We're sunk!"

"They've got us now!"

"What shall we ever do?"

"Does anybody know anything about the game?" inquired Marian, when she could make herself heard. There was silence for a moment; then Jeanette calmly announced, "Nancy does."

The girls literally fell upon Nancy as their only hope, and begged her to teach them all she knew.

"And we've only a week to learn in," lamented Fanny Kreig. "Isn't it just like those little snips to give us so short a time."

"They think, of course, that we know nothing about baseball," began Helen Pond.

"And, for most of us, they're discouragingly right," declared Ethel King, determinedly.

"Let's elect Nancy captain and coach," proposed Sara Rosenthal.

"Done!" cried everybody, that is everyone but Julia Thompson, who did not vote at all. She would never have attended class meeting if her curiosity had not urged her on. Then, too, perhaps some time she'd have a chance to get even with Nancy, or be able to serve the

class in some way that would make everybody hail her as its deliverer.

"Speech! Speech!" cried the girls, all turning to look at Nancy.

Jeanette and Ethel pushed her out of her seat and onto her feet in spite of her resistance.

"I don't know anything to say except thank you," she began, "and I'll try to do my best to turn out a winning team."

Nancy picked her team rapidly after a try-out in the Gym during an hour when the Freshmen were busy; then Fanny arranged to have the practicing done in the recreation room of the factory, where they would be undisturbed, and preparations went on.

After receiving Dr. Donovan's letter announcing his marriage, Nancy had written him a stiff little note of congratulation. She knew it was not at all what he would expect, but it was the best she could do at that time. The shock was wearing off a bit now, however, and things were beginning to adjust themselves in her mind. A talk with her mother during the Easter vacation had made her see that it was not kind to dear Uncle John to act this way. Surely she wanted him to be happy, and if he expected to find happiness in this marriage, she, who loved him so much, should certainly do nothing to mar it. She had found it difficult,

even then, to write him like the old Nancy; but the ball game gave her an excellent subject, and she determined to give him a letter which would indicate that she was her natural self again. Therefore, the day after the game, while the details were still fresh in her mind, she wrote him an account of it.

DEAR UNCLE JOHN :

This is going to be a long, long letter; so get yourself fixed all cozy in a nice easy-chair. Put your glasses on real secure (You haven't lost them since you left, have you?) and prepare for a long siege. You have had them often, with me; haven't you? But this is different: it's about baseball, and it happened like this.

A few days ago we received a note from the Freshmen challenging us to a game of indoor baseball. We had, in modern parlance, put one over on them in the way we conducted our Sophomore banquet. They were looking for revenge, and hoped to get it out of the proposed game. As I have played ball with you ever since I was big enough to hold one, and played indoor ball more or less at high school, of course I was delighted; but imagine my consternation when I perceived that the class at large took it as a sort of death warrant. It seems that most of them knew nothing about baseball; had never played the game, and many had never even seen one (a game, not a ball).

When Janie broadcast the fact that I knew how to play, the class's estimation of your niece was raised several degrees. I was hailed as

the heroine of the hour, the deliverer in distress, the savior of the class honor, etc., etc.; and they clung to me, individually and collectively, literally and figuratively. I was at once elected captain of the Sophomore Indoor Baseball Team—a team, you understand, which did not exist; but I was informed that it was up to me to get away with it somehow.

Well, I got up a team—such a team! I was captain, pitcher, and coach. If I had the time and the genius properly to commit to paper the experience of the practice games, my fortune would be made; for I honestly do not believe that funnier antics have ever been performed than took place during the past week. We did our practicing in the recreation hall of a factory in Roxford. The father of one of the girls is manager of the company, and got us the use of the place. We didn't want any Freshmen around to see how poor we were.

Yesterday, the real game came off. How I wish you could have seen it! As captain and general manager for the Sophs, I suppose I should have been very indignant over the foolish plays. And I confess I was, in spots; but my sense of humor got the upper hand—hence this letter. To enable you to appreciate more fully the various incidents of the game, I must take time to tell you something of my players.

I pitched; Jeanette played first base, and Ethel King was catcher. That completed the real part of my team. My second baseman was a blue-eyed, fluffy-haired girl, with the best of intentions, but little more. Sometimes she caught the ball; more often she didn't. But

she was willing, seemed to comprehend the game readily, and so she got the post. The third baseman is a mixture. She can hit pretty well, she's a good runner, but she is sure to miss the ball unless notified several seconds in advance of its coming. The left fielder was Fanny Kreig. The right fielder was a big-eyed innocent looking creature, who never comes to until after the subject in hand has been changed several times. The shortstop would have made a fair player with a year or two of practice, but she had a remarkable propensity for prostration; I mean this literally: she fell every time she turned around, and also many times when she didn't turn around. However, I was somewhat encouraged a few days before the game was to take place, by hearing from good authority that the Freshmen really did not have a good team either: they were simply getting one up the same as we were, and had sent us the challenge feeling sure we couldn't meet it. This information helped me a great deal, especially as I thought of my fielders; for, I reflected, those poor Freshmen won't often knock one out very far. But to get back to the game.

Our girls were in the field first, and I succeeded in striking out the first three Frosh up. I discovered in the game that their team, relatively speaking, was good; but their pitcher was quite below average. I made first base easily. The Frosh pitcher struck out the next two up, and I stole third in the meantime. Fourth girl up made first, and I got home. Fifth girl struck out. Score 1-0, our favor. The

game proceeded through the next two innings with no incidents funny enough to relate, although the whole thing was sufficiently funny to me, when it wasn't tragic; and at the beginning of the fourth inning, the score was 5-4, our favor.

During the fourth inning the Freshmen got one mighty good hit, knocking a swift grounder over into right field. There were two out at the time, and two on bases. My never-wake-up right fielder moved gracefully, if none too swiftly, after the ball, while the Freshman on third ran home, the one on second made third, and the batter got to second. In what seemed ages to me, she got hold of the ball, but the runners were still going; and I stood in the middle of the diamond madly shouting directions, my voice lost in the volume of shrieks about me. She turned and looked, still holding the ball, and inquired in an aggrieved voice, "What *are* you hollering about?" Can you imagine that? The score was then 7-5, favor of the Freshmen; and it remained so at the end of the inning.

In the fifth inning, the first Frosh up drove a fly into left field. I held my breath, hoping against hope that my fielder might catch it; but behold, there she was placidly sitting in the farthest corner of the field on a camp stool which, as she subsequently informed me, she had requested someone to bring over in case she should get tired—which she had. The second baseman came to, and got the ball while my ease-lover was getting up; and in the meantime the Freshman got to third.

The game proceeded without any serious damage being done, except to my temper, until the eighth inning, when my catcher hurt her ankle and had to give up. To say that I was disturbed is putting it mildly; but the score was 15-14, favor the Freshmen, and I knew we still had a chance. So I sighed resignedly and put in a green catcher who assured me she knew just what to do; but her actions belied her words. Two out, and three on bases; the catcher dropped the ball on a second strike. The Freshman on second didn't see the Freshman on third, and so tried to steal a base. Coming to halfway, she started to run back, when my double-dyed "green" catcher picked up the ball hastily; and what *do* you suppose she did? She ran nearly all the way from the catcher's box to second base to "touch" the Freshman runner before she could get back to second! Worse yet, the shortstop got in her way, both upsetting in the excitement, with the ball lost between them, while all three Freshmen came in! The first half of the ninth inning ended with a score of 19-14 against us. It certainly looked hopeless.

I was *real* mad by this time, just enough so, in fact, to play well; and I made a good hit and got to second. Jeanette struck out, and the dear creature then constituted herself as coach. You would never have recognized the staid little Janie if you had seen the pitch of excitement to which this game had worked her. The Sophs breathed the hope that, by some remarkable intervention of Providence, we might win yet. The third girl up bunted the ball, and the

shortstop fumbled and dropped it, I running in in the meantime. The poor batter, however (my oft-prostrated shortstop), fell about three feet away from first base, having stumbled over nothing. Janie rushed madly at her, and noticing that the pitcher was still trying to get a stationary hold on the ball, gave her a not over-gentle shove which landed her safely on first. Fortunately the Umpire didn't see this remarkable piece of coaching. During the two strikes of the next girl up, the player who had been pushed so unceremoniously over first, stole second and third, apparently deciding that it was safer and more comfortable to run than to take a chance on being helped by Janie. Janie ran around to third, and continued to coach, growing more excited every minute. The girl at the bat made a fair hit, but the one on third, whom Janie was watching, didn't run; so, clutching madly at her arm, Janie forced her nearly to home plate without discovering that she was pushing along the *Freshman third baseman!* Our shortstop really had run at the proper moment, and another run was registered for our team.

Such shrieks I have never heard. This doesn't seem nearly so funny, as I write it; but, Uncle dear, if you could have seen little Jeanette trying to force the big Freshman third baseman, weighing nearly fifty pounds more than Jeanette does, all the way from third base to home plate, you would have collapsed. About this time one of the decisions struck the Freshmen as unfair. I really believe it was, and that the Umpire was taking pity on us, our team

was so unquestionably "green." And in their extreme annoyance, they made wild plays, fumbled the ball, etc., and the game ended 20-19, *our* favor.

To-day the members of the teams can scarcely walk, so sore are their muscles; then too, they might overbalance, so swelled are their heads (the Sophomores', that is). The funny part of it is that each girl thinks it is quite through her efforts that the game was won! Now we talk baseball, we eat baseball, and we sleep baseball. The girls are just wild to keep at it, and it is rumored that each class is going to get up a team. Will you blame me if I follow the example of my classmates and believe that this "progress" is through me?

Poor Uncle, what volumes I've written! But I knew you would appreciate that game. I should probably run on forever if duty (mean old thing!) wasn't tugging at my sleeve; but, now I'm going to tell you a secret: if I don't soon make up some of the work that I've neglected while coaching my team, they won't let me stay to complete the work I've begun, this referring to my baseball career.

I've covered so much space with the baseball story that I simply can't write you about anything else this time.

All kinds of love to you, Uncle dear, and to—
my new aunt,

From

Your affectionate

Baseball Manager,	Coach, and
Captain,	Pitcher,

NANCY.

CHAPTER XIX

VISITORS' DAY

SINCE the baseball game took place so late in the last term, the Freshmen had no further opportunity to even matters up with the Sophomores. Each class had held its banquet unmolested, and the Sophomores had won the game; so at the end of the year the score between the two classes stood two to one in favor of the second year girls. At the first assembly in May, therefore, the Sophomore Class of women was announced as winner in the year's rivalry.

Another important announcement was made also. Mrs. Burling, widow of a former Roxford professor, donated a prize of \$200 to the class attaining the highest average for the year. It was in memory of her husband, and was to be known as the "Frederick Burling Scholarship Prize," and would be awarded annually at the first assembly in May. The disposition of the money was to be left to the pleasure of the winning class.

When Mrs. Burling was a "Faculty Wife,"

as the wives of the instructors were called, she had been made an honorary member of Eta Sigma. Naturally, she was not quite so prominent in college affairs after the death of Dr. Burling; but she still kept up her association with the sorority.

“So that’s why you were so concerned about your studies earlier in the year,” commented Julia to Nancy as the girls left the assembly hall. The two had scarcely spoken since the carnival, and Nancy was surprised at the remark.

“What do you mean?”

“Why, you naturally knew about the prize beforehand and hoped to help your class win it.”

“I never even heard a rumor about such a thing until now, any more than you did.”

“Well, you lost out anyhow,” said Julia, with satisfaction. “The Seniors have the highest standing.”

How she knew, Nancy did not stop to inquire; her one idea was to get away from Julia as soon as possible. Every time they chanced to meet, the girl went out of her way to be disagreeable. She told Jeanette of the encounter on their way to the laboratory, but Jeanette made light of it.

“Don’t bother about her,” she advised; but despite her advice, she felt a little uneasy.

Was Julia going to start things all over again?

A couple of weeks before final examinations, Roxford College held what was known as Visitors' Day. Things were usually planned so that it would fall on Friday or Saturday, for the greater accommodation of people from out of town. From early in the morning until late at night the campus and buildings were open to anyone who cared to visit them. Refreshment tents were erected at several points within the campus fence, and simple food was served at cost prices. The members of the Freshman Class were always assigned to take charge of these tents. The Sophomores acted as ushers and guides. The Juniors gave a vaudeville entertainment in the Gym at four in the afternoon and again at eight in the evening. The Seniors were privileged characters, and had no duties except such as they chose to assume.

The custom was of very recent origin. Certain members of the faculty had felt for some time that it would be desirable for prospective students to see the college and know something of it beforehand; that a day of inspection and sociability would stimulate public interest in the college; and that many of the people who thronged the institution during Commencement would probably prefer to visit at a time when more attention could be given them individually. Accordingly, three years previous,

they had tried it out; and it was such a success that it was decided to establish it as a regular Roxford custom.

Nancy had invited Dorothy and Curtis Owen to come if they cared to, and her invitation was acknowledged and accepted by return mail. Jeanette wrote Martha of the coming event, and urged her to attend and bring as many as she could of the old crowd from Eastport. She was very anxious to have her father and mother, as well as Georgia, be her guests; but her parents thought the expense of the trip would be too great for one day. They preferred to wait until her graduation. Nancy had sent a most urgent letter to her father, begging him to come and bring her mother; but their ideas were almost an exact repetition of the Grants'.

The second of June was an ideal day. The sun was hot, but the air comfortably cool. The grass, trees, and the vine which crept over the old buildings were so fresh and green, and all the flowering shrubs which filled in corners and odd angles of the campus were in full bloom. Girls in light-colored dresses, and men in white flannels, were everywhere. Some of the men preferred to absent themselves from the whole affair. Among these was Phil Spenser. He had no notion of having to help the co-eds in the refreshment tents. Catch him

taking orders from the guests who were seated at the little tables, and carrying them to the girls at the tents to be filled! So he and some other individuals whose ideas coincided with his, sneaked away, went to East Park, rented a canoe, and departed on an all-day trip up the river.

The Freshman women were somewhat disturbed at having to remain in the tents all day. There were so few of them that they could hardly work in relays as previous classes had done.

"We won't see a thing in here," grumbled Sue Laird, piling little cakes on a long tray.

"I know it. We'll even miss the show; and they say it is good," replied Eleanor Bird.

"Never mind, girls," consoled Molly Mann. "Think of next year when we'll be guides and see everything."

"Oh, next year!" scoffed Edna Pierce. "A bird in hand— Who knows where we'll be next year!"

Curtis Owen had driven Dorothy down in his new roadster, and Nancy was talking with them when Martha arrived with Helen Morris and Laura Atkinson. Jeanette joined them, and they had a delightful reunion in front of Bayard Hall. Some strangers arrived presently, and hesitated as if they did not know quite what to do.

"It's your turn to do something useful, Nancy," said Julia, coming up to the group. "Don't you see those people over there?"

It was perfectly true that Nancy had not done any work as guide so far, and Julia had; so without bothering to answer back, Nancy excused herself, crossed the driveway and offered to conduct the newcomers through the buildings. Julia turned at once toward Curtis and began an animated conversation with him.

She was good company when she chose to be, and she succeeded in interesting the young man to such an extent that the rest of the party finally drifted away in different directions.

"Why did you leave Curt with the vamp?" asked Helen impatiently, as Dorothy drew her away from them and down a side path.

"Don't worry about him for one minute," replied his sister. "He is quite capable of taking care of himself. But I'm starved; let's go and get something to eat."

After the rest of the party were a safe distance away, Julia noticed their absence, apparently for the first time. "Why," she exclaimed in surprise, "they've all gone and left us."

"Doesn't matter, does it?" inquired Curtis.

"No—o, I suppose not, except that I was going to ask one of the girls to go uptown with

me. There is something I must get this morning, and I do hate to go places alone."

"Why not let me take you?"

Curtis was an obliging fellow who always went out of his way to oblige a girl or woman. Manlike, he had forgotten all about the story told him at the carnival.

"My car is out there in front of the south-east gate," he continued, as the girl hesitated.

"Oh, I couldn't think of taking you away from your friends," she said. "I can go alone."

Curtis glanced about and saw that Nancy was just disappearing into Bayard Hall with the party for whom she had left him. It would be at least half an hour, maybe more, before she was free again; so he might as well play the Good Samaritan and take this girl uptown.

"It won't take long; and I won't spill you out of the car," laughed Curtis.

"You're very kind indeed to bother about me," replied Julia, beginning to walk rapidly toward the gate, lest he repent of his bargain. Nancy might be back at any minute and what chance would she have then?

It was with great satisfaction that she saw Ethel King, Esther Moore, and Marian Stone across the campus close to the gate just as she stepped into Curtis's shining green roadster.

They certainly couldn't have helped seeing her. The ride to town was delightful, although far too short.

"Where do you want to go?" inquired Curtis, as they turned onto Main Street.

"To Carpenter's department store."

"Can I park here, or shall I have to ride around until you come out?"

"I'm afraid you'll have to keep going; but I shan't be long."

On his third trip around the block she reappeared.

"Why so worried looking?" he asked, as she slipped into the car beside him.

"I just remembered something I forgot—" she began vaguely.

"Or forgot something you should have remembered."

"Either. You see, I invited a guest for to-day's doings. She's coming in on the eleven twenty-five on the Central, and I really should meet her."

Curtis glanced at his wrist watch. He was eager to get back to Nancy, but he must be polite.

"Just ten thirty," he said. "Well, we might take a little spin and get back to the station in time to take her back with us."

"That would be lovely; but I don't like to keep you away from your friend so long."

"She won't mind. Nan's a good sport."

"Yes, isn't she? I know her very well. We were most intimate during the early part of the year, and I became fond of her. It's certainly too bad—" she hesitated.

"What's too bad?" demanded Curtis.

"Oh, haven't you heard?"

"Heard what?" he asked impatiently.

"Well, if you haven't, I'm sure I don't want to be the one to tell you. I am still most awfully sorry about the whole thing, for, as I say I am fond of Nan. But where there is so much smoke, you know."

"Now, Miss Thompson, you've started something and you might as well go ahead and finish it. I'm sure I haven't a ghost of an idea what you're talking about, and I want to find out; especially if it's anything that's being circulated against Nancy Pembroke. I know, without even hearing it, that it isn't true; but I want to know what's being said. Now finish your story," he ordered.

"How dictatorial you are!" Julia was a bit frightened. She hadn't counted on quite such a vehement attitude.

"I mean it," he said. "Shoot!"

When they returned to the campus, with Maude Pond squeezed between them, the first person they met near the gate at which they

stopped was Nancy. She was hurrying across the path that led from that entrance toward one of the refreshment tents. Curtis's disappearance had surprised and puzzled her; for Ethel and Marian had not mentioned to the rest of the girls what they had seen earlier in the morning. Pretending that she had not noticed the approach of the car, she kept on her way and was soon lost in the crowd around the tent.

Curtis, looking like a thundercloud, went in search of his sister. It was no easy task trying to locate any certain person; and he wandered about for some time before he caught sight of her near the tennis courts. Helen Morris was with her, but that didn't matter; they were such friends that whatever one knew, the other did. Helen was at their house in Eastport so often that she was almost like another sister to him.

"What's the matter, Curt?" asked Dorothy, looking at him keenly as he hurried up to them.

"Matter enough! What is there to this cock-and-bull story that Miss Thompson told me about Nancy?"

"I'm sure I don't know what she told you. What possessed you anyhow to take that girl out riding? I certainly was more than peeved when I heard you had gone off with her."

Curtis explained briefly how he happened to

take Julia downtown, and Helen interrupted. "What is the story, Curt?" she asked.

He repeated what Julia had cleverly hinted at rather than presented in actual statements.

"The same old thing," sighed Helen, when he had finished. "I thought, and certainly hoped, that had died out. I told you, Dorothy, that during her first term this Julia started a rumor to the effect that Nan was dishonest?"

Dorothy nodded.

"You see," she explained to Curtis, "the girl isn't our kind at all, but she fastened herself onto Nancy during the first part of the year and seemed to get a regular hold on her; in fact, she nearly spoiled her. When Nan was prevailed upon to give her up, Julia got plain mad, and she has been horrid ever since. She never loses an opportunity to be disagreeable to Nancy, and she started this rumor purposely for revenge. She is keen to be popular herself, and is jealous of Nan's popularity. And she seems to be absolutely unscrupulous in her methods of showing her pique."

"Of course, I didn't fall for her story; but in going off with her as I did, I was fool enough to let her make a tool of me in her program of revenge against Nan!" Curtis groaned.

"I hope it will teach you a lesson," said Dorothy severely. "You're all too ready to fall for any woman who pretends to be in distress."

Then, turning to Helen, she asked: "Has nothing been done yet to check the story?"

"No; nobody knew what to do."

"Well," said Dorothy, with determination, "I'm going to see Julia and shut her up."

"But how?"

"Well, I don't know yet; but I'll find some way. She's not going on with this sort of thing any longer." Dorothy headed with determined steps toward the Gym, where Julia was sitting on the coping alone.

"You had better go and make peace with Nancy," Helen advised Curtis, as Dorothy left them.

"She probably won't have anything to do with me," said Curtis gloomily.

"Perhaps not," was the none too soothing reply; "and I can't say that I blame her much."

Nancy led Curtis a merry dance; for she had been hurt and somewhat angry when she saw him return with her two enemies. She was always surrounded with other people, when he succeeded in getting close enough to speak; for she was taking more than her share of guide duty in order to avoid him.

"I can't get near her," he reported to Helen a couple of hours later. "Help a fellow out; won't you?"

"I'll see what I can do," she promised. The poor fellow seemed so wretched that she

felt sorry for him. She watched for a good chance, and succeeded in getting close enough to Nancy to whisper, "I wouldn't be angry at Curtis if I were you. Give him a chance to explain. It was a trick on Julia's part; and you will be playing right into her hand if you give Curt the cold shoulder all day."

Nancy looked at Helen without replying.

"Will you take a little walk with him if I send him to you?"

Nancy nodded slowly.

After reporting to Curtis, Helen watched from a safe distance, and saw them stroll off across the campus away from the crowd. She noted with great satisfaction that Julia also was watching them.

Dorothy had not returned since her talk with Julia, and Helen was wild to know how it had come out; so she went to look for her. Jeanette caught up with her on one of the driveways.

"Where is Nan, Helen?" she asked. "She has worked like fury all day, and I've hardly had a word with her. The last time I ran across her she seemed dreadfully out of sorts; I thought she was about ready to cry."

"She's gone off somewhere with Curtis. I'll tell you what's the matter with her," and Helen gave Jeanette an account of the morning's affair. "I'm looking for Dorothy now, to hear what luck she had with Julia."

"Poor Nan!" sighed Jeanette. "She's certainly paying dearly for her intimacy with Julia. I hope she will never hear about the stories her one-time friend has been telling about her."

"There is Dorothy now!"

She was talking with some people near the laboratory; but when she saw the girls motioning to her, she excused herself and came toward them.

"I know what you want of me," was her greeting. "Let's walk while we talk."

Up and down a deserted path on the outskirts of the campus they strolled, while she told them of her interview with Julia.

"I didn't mince matters. I went right up to her and said: 'To suit some purpose of your own, or for some revenge, you have been circulating a story about Nancy Pembroke which is strictly false.' She looked at me as if I were a worm under her feet, and said, insolently, 'Well? Need it concern you?'"

"'It does concern me very much,' I replied. 'I have known Nancy Pembroke and her family for a long time. (I have known her uncle for ages) and I know that these stories of yours are plain lies. You had better stop circulating them at once; and, wherever possible, correct the false impressions you have given people

concerning her, or you'll find yourself in serious trouble.'

" 'Indeed!' she said. She was trying to keep up a good bluff, but I saw that she was a bit scared. 'Might I inquire who will make this trouble, as you put it?'

" 'I shall,' I said. 'And I have many friends here among the students, and several on the faculty; and I shall not hesitate to make public your scheme to injure Nancy.'

" 'She was still unwilling to capitulate; and with an attempt at bravado, she asked, 'If Miss Pembroke is so innocent as you imply, why didn't some of her many friends deny the accusation before this? They have let it pass until now.'

" 'Because,' I said, 'being so closely connected with everything here, they hesitated to cause a fuss and get you into trouble. The stories were so ridiculous that they felt sure nobody who knew Nancy would believe them.' (I didn't want to tell her that it was for the sake of sparing Nan the information and the publicity.) 'I'm an outsider,' I went on, 'and I'm not at all bashful about placing the matter in the hands of the faculty. The very next time you open your mouth on the subject, I'll do it; then, instead of being popular, as you desire, your days here will be numbered. Think

it over, and don't try any trickery. You've been a bit clumsy at it so far, and I shall keep in close touch with affairs here from now on.' She had practically nothing more to say; but I think I have her sufficiently frightened to be able to assure you that there will be no further trouble from her."

"Oh, Dorothy," breathed Jeanette. "I'm so glad you came to-day. Of course, I'm always glad to see you," she added quickly, as the other two girls laughed, "but I'm especially delighted to think you were here at just the right time. You can't imagine what it meant to me to have these ugly rumors floating around, and be able to do nothing about it." Jeanette was almost in tears.

"I wonder how my brother is getting along," observed Dorothy, as they walked back toward the crowd again. "I've been furious with him for going off with that girl, and yet if he hadn't, I wouldn't have had this session with her, and there's no telling how far the rumors would have gone."

"Queer, isn't it," observed Jeanette, "that a circumstance which we fuss about often turns out most satisfactorily?"

"The green roadster's gone," announced Helen, looking toward the gate at which it had stood.

"Good!" said Dorothy. "Then things are probably all fixed up again."

It was nearly time for the evening performance of the Junior vaudeville when Nancy and Curtis were seen again. They entered the campus from the back gate, and went directly to the Gym. The entertainment was somewhat lengthy, owing to the many encores; and at its close, Dorothy pushed through the crowd on the steps, to get to their side.

"I hate to drag you away, Curt," she said, "but we won't get home until nearly midnight; and Mother will worry if we're on the road any later."

"All right," he said. "We'll start at once. Wish we had room for the rest of you," addressing Martha, Helen, and Laura who were just ahead of them.

"They are going to stay all night, and go back some time to-morrow," replied Jeanette.

"Did you have a good time, Nan?" asked Martha, from her cot in the girls' room.

"Yes, on the whole, I really did," she answered.

And Jeanette, with a fervor which the other two girls could not understand, contributed, "I think it was a *wonderful* day!"

CHAPTER XX

LOOKING AHEAD

THE week before Commencement, the Junior Yearbook was published, and the girls could hardly wait for it to go on sale after the last class on Friday afternoon. A crowd of Eta Sigma girls were piled on the davenport reading one of the copies, when Nancy entered the living room.

"Oh, Nan!" they cried.

"What's the matter?"

"You're in the Yearbook!"

"I am? Where? Why?" She dropped down almost on top of Jeanette, and looked at the page over which they were poring.

There was Jeanette's poem about Dad's picture, and under it was the announcement:

Nancy Pembroke, Bundle Wrapper.

Rates Reasonable.

Safe Delivery (in sections) Guaranteed.

"Where is Clarice?" demanded Nancy.

"What won't I do to her!"

But, fortunately for Clarice, she was nowhere to be seen.

"You might add trunk packing to the bundle wrapping," laughed Jeanette. Nancy laughed too, for her attempts to get everything she needed in one trunk always called for the combined efforts of the family.

"Don't speak of trunks!" entreated Ethel King. "Do you realize that five days from today most of us will be at home, and before we start for home the *trunks* must be packed?"

"I always dread the end of the year," wailed Esther Moore, "and the job of packing contributes in no small measure to that dread."

"I agree with you," said Betty Clemonts. "If there is anything I hate to do, it's pack a trunk, or a bag, or anything else."

"There, Nan," advised Suzanne Eliot, "now's your chance to start your business. Remember, opportunity knocks but once."

"Well I won't turn packer for anybody, except perhaps Janie, if she wanted me to, which she wouldn't because she's far better at it than I am. Seriously, girls, I'd like to find something to do next year."

"You would, Nan?" asked Suzanne. "Why, if you don't mind telling?"

"Well, I won't be quite so rushed with study next year. The Junior schedule is a bit easier; and well, to be perfectly frank, my allowance is not sufficiently elastic to cover all my needs.

And I do hate to be asking for more, when I know it isn't easy to send it."

"Now, Nan, I've told you again and again that I'd be only too glad—" began Jeanette.

"Yes, I know; but I'm afraid I'm a bit independent even with the people I know best. Don't be hurt, Janie. I'd take from you rather than from anyone else; you know that." She squeezed Janie's arm affectionately. "But, Suzanne," she went on, "what do other girls do; do you know?"

"Oh, they tutor, take care of children, both faculty and ordinary, wait on table in the tea rooms and boarding houses, work in the library, read to invalids, do mending, and——"

"Oh, but I couldn't do a single one of those things," lamented Nancy, "except possibly read to invalids."

"Of course, you could; but perhaps by next year somebody will leave you a fortune," said Ethel King.

"No such luck!"

"I'm quite sure you will be able to find something, Nannie," said Suzanne encouragingly. "Don't worry about it, anyhow, and spoil your vacation."

"By the way," inquired Betty Clemonts, "what is everybody going to do this summer?"

The conversation switched to vacation plans, and Nancy's needs were forgotten for the time.

Unless they were especially needed, few of the members of the under classes ever remained for Commencement; so on the eighteenth of June, Nancy and Jeanette were on their way to the station.

"Just think," said Nancy, "we haven't made one single plan for vacation."

"That's so; but we've been so very busy. I wonder if each succeeding college year is busier than the one before it; if it is, I can't imagine what the Senior year must be. But about vacation, we must discuss it on the train."

They were a trifle later in leaving the sorority house than they had intended—it always takes so much longer to say good-by than you think it's going to—and they had to run at full speed down the platform to get into their car before the train started.

Breathless and a trifle disheveled, they sank into their chairs.

"Now," said Nancy, when they had recovered somewhat, and were settled for the trip, "let's talk about vacation. I had a couple of invitations. How many did you receive?"

"Two."

"You tell yours first."

"Esther wants both of us to go to visit her in Buffalo. I'm so glad, Nannie, that everyone always asks us both. They realize that, if they want either of us, they'll have to include the

other. I can't imagine myself on a vacation without you."

Nancy agreed with her, and assured her that she felt the same way about being separated when going on a vacation.

"And what is the other?" she asked.

"Oh, Helen Pond's people have a cottage at Sodus Bay, where Helen stays all summer. She said we would be welcome there whenever we chose to come. Now yours."

"Marian and her folks camp near Drake-Eaton Park all vacation; and she wants us to spend part of August with her, but while I like Marian a lot, I don't think I'd care for camping. Do you?"

"I'm afraid not. We're both too fond of comfort and luxury to like roughing it."

"Besides, we've just left Roxford, and will be going back in the fall; so I'd rather not go back in the summer."

"What was the other bid?"

"Ethel is going to be on Lake Champlain in July, and she'd like us to go there for a week or two. They have a cottage—you know the kind of 'cottage' Ethel's people would have—with all the comforts of home."

"That sounds inviting."

"Doesn't it? I thought we would try to go there, if you would like it."

"I'd love it. We'll see what our folks have to say."

"What about Georgia?" asked Nancy. "Will you feel that she should go everywhere with us this summer?"

"Oh no, I think not. She isn't a guest, you know; just a member of the family. She would not expect or want to go off on a trip with us. She will doubtless be working most of the summer; I think she will have a vacation of only two weeks."

Nancy felt relieved. She had gone a long way toward conquering her jealousy of Janie, and never felt toward Georgia as she had at first toward Madelon; but it was nice to know that she would not interfere with their vacation plans.

"Janie!" cried Nancy suddenly, after a few minutes' silence.

"What is it? You startled me."

Nancy laughed. "Oh, it's nothing to get startled over; but I was just thinking: if we go to Ethel's, we can see the places Miss Ashton intended to show us last year when our trip was cut short."

"That's so. I hope we can accept her invitation."

"So do I."

All through the day the girls' conversation

kept returning to plans for the long vacation. They had had such a delightful taste of travel and sight-seeing the preceding year, that they longed to continue the experience.

THE END

